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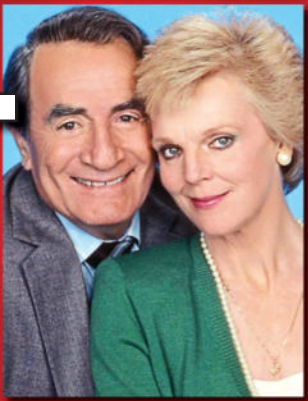

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GH 60TH ANNIVERSARY

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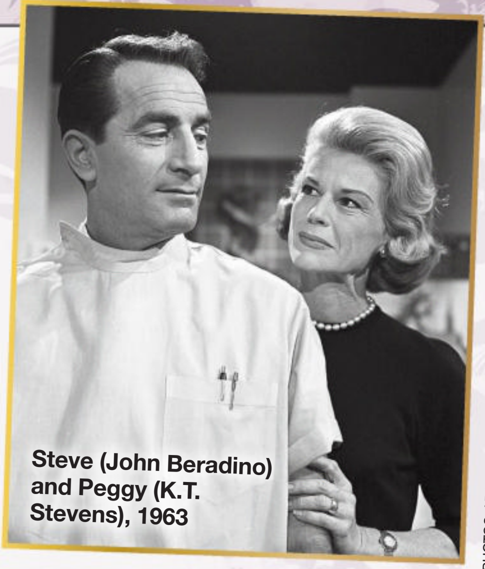
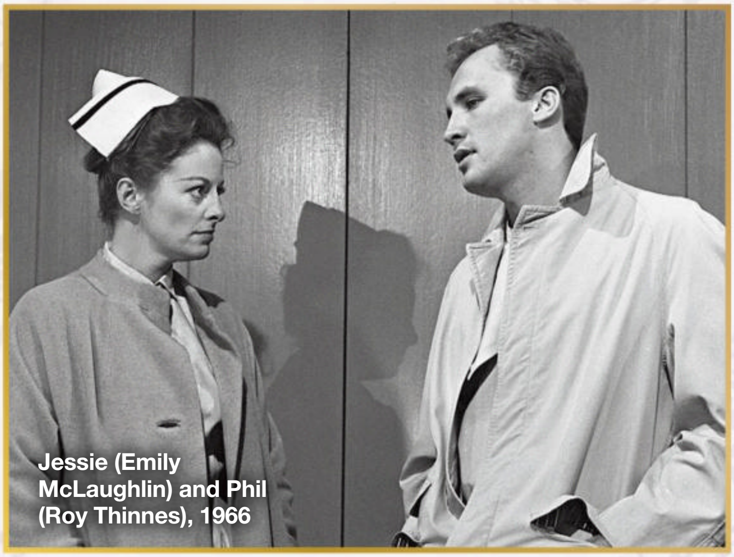
A GOOD START

Photos from the early years in Port Charles.

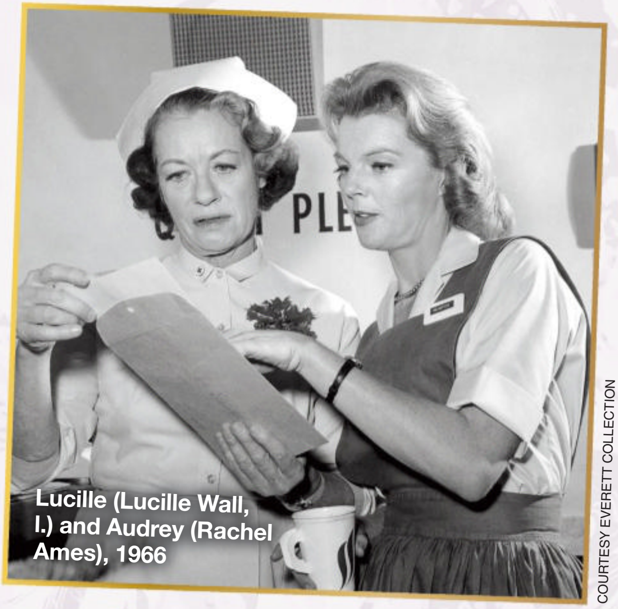


Steve (John Beradino) and Peggy (K.T. Stevens), 1963

PHOTOS: ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES



Jessie (Emily McLaughlin) and Phil (Roy Thinnes), 1966



Lucille (Lucille Wall, l.) and Audrey (Rachel Ames), 1966

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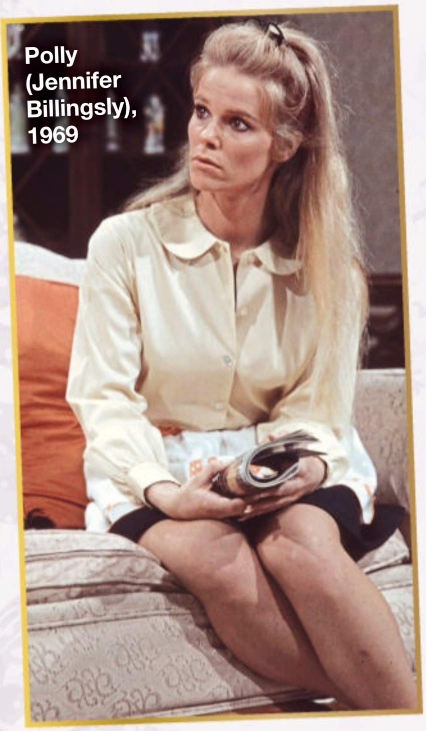
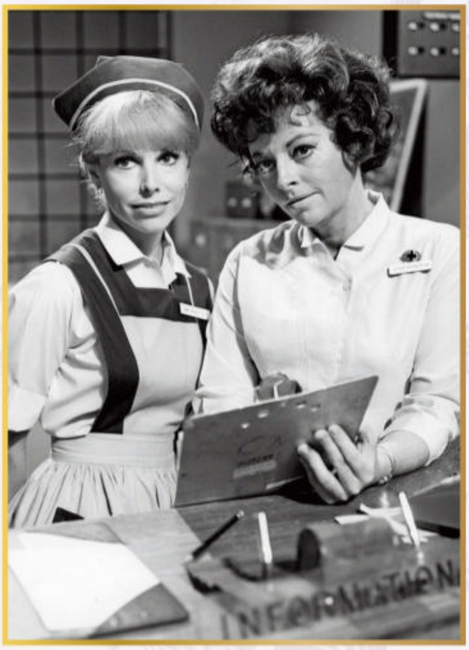
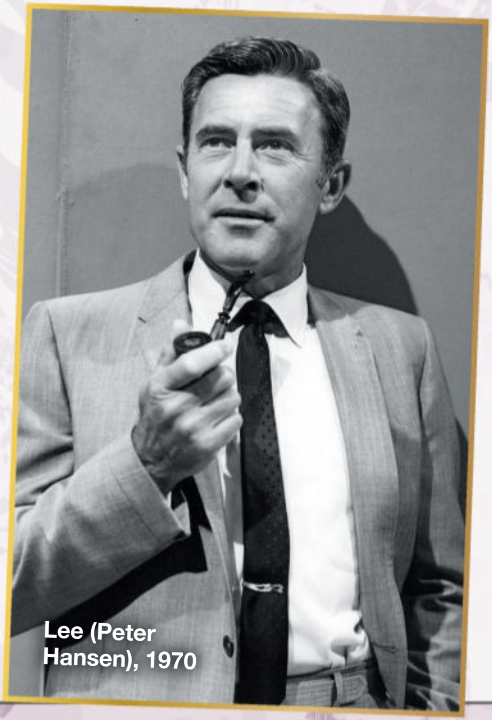


Polly (Jennifer Billingsly), 1969

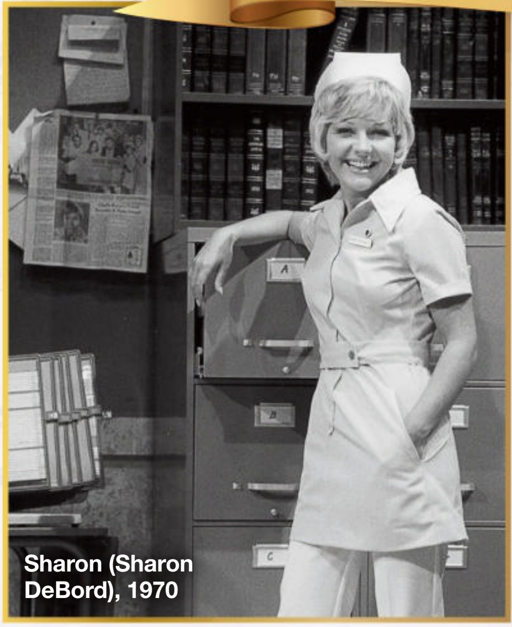


Judy (Robin Blake) and Jessie, 1970

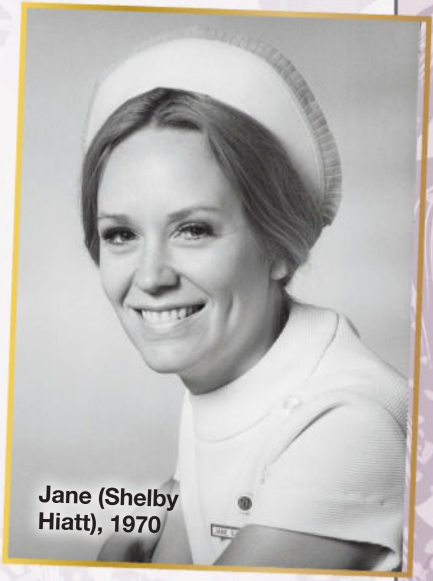


Lee (Peter Hansen), 1970

Tom (Paul Savior), 1970

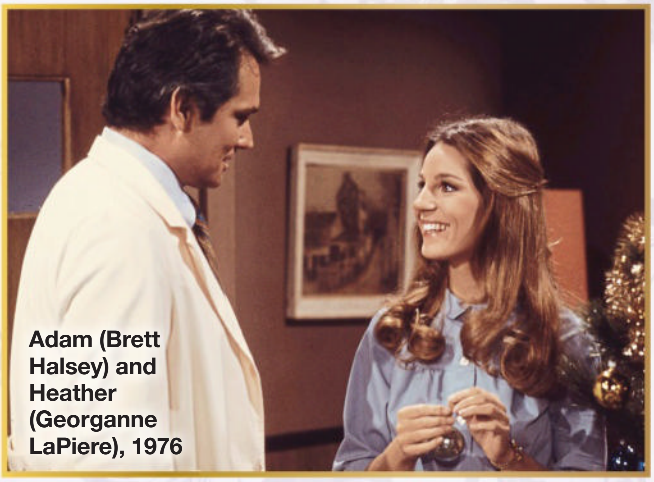


Sharon (Sharon DeBord), 1970



Jane (Shelby Hiatt), 1970

Beth (Michele Conaway, l.) and Diana (Valerie Starrett), 1976



Adam (Brett Halsey) and Heather (Georganne LaPiere), 1976

(From l.) Peter (Craig Heubing), Laura (Genie Francis), Rick (Mike Gregory), Lesley (Denise Alexander) and Steve, 1978

COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION

Francis, Anthony Geary (Luke) and Executive Producer Gloria Monty, 1980

COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION

RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC

GENIE *Francis*

(Laura Webber, 1977-1982, 1983, 1984, 1993-2002, 2006, 2008, 2013, 2015-present)

A 14-year-old Genie Francis was sitting in her 8th grade algebra class when she found out she'd booked the role that shot her to unprecedented fame, including the covers of Newsweek *and* People *and a viewing audience of 30 million for her character's 1981 wedding.*

Who did you look up to when you were new to the show? "Oh, that's easy: Rachel Ames [ex-Audrey], Emily McLaughlin [ex-Jessie], Denise Alexander [ex-Lesley], Leslie Charleson [Monica]. There was also an actress named Lee Warrick. I loved her because she was playing a woman [Mary Ellen] who was a little bit insane [*laughs*] and she was great. I enjoyed her a lot."

What are your warmest memories of your early days on set? "I would have to say when John Beradino [ex-Steve] read the Christmas story and we all gathered and listened to it. It was truly special listening to him tell that story and he did it beautifully. Hands down, that's the warmest."

One fateful day, Gloria took you and your dad to lunch and asked for his permission to give Laura a bigger, more mature storyline. Were you excited? "I was more than excited; I was definitely chomping at the bit and dying to show the world what I was capable of doing. I think it might have been the David Hamilton story [Laura's older lover, who she accidentally kills], where I finally got to do something really good and I got to do my best work because Laura flips out and loses her memory and has to go to a psychiatrist to overcome her mental block. I mean, I was loving it!"

Shortly thereafter, the Scotty/Laura pairing took off. What stands out to you about that era? "I'd say that was absolutely one of the happiest times for me on the show. Kin [Shriner, Scotty] was so good to me. He was so goofy and funny. He was the one who would lose his lines or get the most nervous about stuff. There was just a sweetness, you know? And then, of course, he actually ended up being my first boyfriend [in real life], so there was just this whole wonderful, loving thing that took place there."

The early days of Luke and Laura were packed with action and adventure. What was it like to be at the center of that? "I loved doing action/adventure. I thought that was *so* much fun. It's just exciting! You grow up watching those kinds of movies and that's the stuff that, as a kid, you want to play, and I got to do it all! And believe me, I was enjoying all of it."

You left the show not long after the

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Genie Francis reflects on foundational moments in Laura's life, and her own career.

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

One of GH's earliest episodic shots of Laura, in a scene opposite Michael Gregory's Rick, 1978

"Looking at yourself when you were young is weird, don't you think? I'm like, 'Oh, my God, my hair looked so good then!' I also looked at it and thought, 'Oh, my God, it looks like my daughter.' It's nice to see a picture of Michael. Gosh, that really was at the beginning. It looks like we're in the hospital cafeteria and like I'm wearing the little hospital coat from when Laura was a candy striper."

ABC

Laura and Scotty (Kin Shriner) on their Californian honeymoon, 1979

"I stressed out a lot [on that location shoot] because they wanted Laura to be in a bathing suit. I was what, 15 or 16, maybe? And the idea of being in a bathing suit in front of America was very intimidating to me. Gloria [Monty, former executive producer] let me wear a one-piece and she gave me a sort of sheath to wear over myself because I wanted to be more modest."

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Hutch (Rick Moses), Laura and Luke (Anthony Geary) in Beechers Corners, 1980

"I *loved* Beechers Corners. Of all the places and all the things that Luke and Laura did, that was really my favorite, that and, I'd have to say, wearing that big pink dress with the feathers on it and dancing in the department store. That was pretty darn fun, too!" She even maintains an affection for the wig Laura wore while posing as "Lucy Johnson". "Gloria wanted me to like the wig so that I felt good in it, so I did kind of pick it out; it was what I wanted and it was fun. I think it was smart of her, actually, looking back on it, that she wanted me to like my alter ego and have fun with it, which is great."

landmark Luke/Laura wedding in 1981. Looking back, do you feel it was beneficial to you personally to have a separation from the show and from Laura at that time? "You know, I don't really regret any of my choices, if that makes sense. I mean, they were all necessary, the comings and goings. I didn't want to be gone from the show when I left at 40 [and Laura was remanded to a mental institution]; I didn't want to be gone from the show in that way, and I didn't want to be gone that long. But I could not get them to let me back on. It took a very long time. It wasn't until Tony [Geary, ex-Luke] left that they really let me back. Crazy. But that was a long, long time, and fortunately, there were other things I got to do during that time that I enjoyed, too, but it wasn't the long, dry spell that I was hoping for with this show, with GENERAL HOSPITAL."

Your name, and Laura's, are some of the only ones with name recognition among people who don't watch soaps. Do you take pride in that, that the character resonated so enormously? "I think it's amazing, honestly, I do, that the character is still so loved. Even right now, with me at 60, the character is still testing well; I guess they have these things they do where they can [gauge] likability or whatever. It's wonderful to have that! I don't know if I had it in other roles in the same way, or if it's something really special about this character, but I certainly like the way it feels."

What do you most love about Laura as she is now? "I like her strength now. I like her sensibility; I think she's quite practical now. The only thing I worry about now with Laura is that I don't want them to write her too perfect. She's got to have some mistakes, she still has to have feet of clay. I also love her heart. That has always been my favorite part of this character. She leads with her heart, whether bleeding and aching to love or aching and bleeding to be loved. That's what the character is about. She's not in her head, she's not tricky, she's about love, and I think that may be what the audience responds to."

Not only is Laura wildly popular with the audience, but she's prominent in story. Is that rewarding for you? "Yes, and that's been a change. When I first came back when I was 50 [for the 50th anniversary in 2013], that wasn't really there. They had me very compartmentalized. And then they switched it, and they started to go with the fact that she had grown up in the town and she knew all these people and she had relationships and they really let it fill out the character on the screen in such a nice way. And it feels great to me. I love it. I love, also, just getting to work with many different people because that's more fun. I'm very happy with it."

And they're still developing new relationships for Laura, like hers with Ava, for example. "I love that relationship. I really love working with Maura [West, Ava], first of all. Why wouldn't you? She's so professional and so prepared and so good and she's also really funny! There's a lot of laughter between scenes and that's the best."

It also needs to be said, and anyone who watches the show can attest to this, that after all these years, the caliber of your work never takes a dip. "Oh, thank you so much. You know, as we get older, it does get harder to keep the fire in the belly. So I really appreciate hearing that because it is important to me to maintain my own standards and hopefully, you know, continue to grow a bit as I grow."

What does your singular role in GH's legacy mean to you as you reflect on its milestone 60th anniversary? "It feels like an accomplishment. I feel personally proud of this accomplishment in my own life, that I got started at that super-young age and made a lasting impact [so] that I could return to it in my 50s and now into my 60s. It made me well up a bit, the idea of the show turning 60. It was so personal for me; it feels like my.... I don't want to say my baby, but it's my legacy. This feels like even more of an important moment than the 50th, I have to say, just because of the span of time. [To] have made it to the 60th, from the 14th anniversary to the 60th, felt like such a personal accomplishment. I was so proud. It's been a great ride — many chapters, many moments — and just yesterday, I worked and I felt really proud of what I got to do. I still get excited about having a good day of acting; that's never gone away. I work for the good drive home, and yesterday, I had a good drive home."

ERIK HEIN/ABC

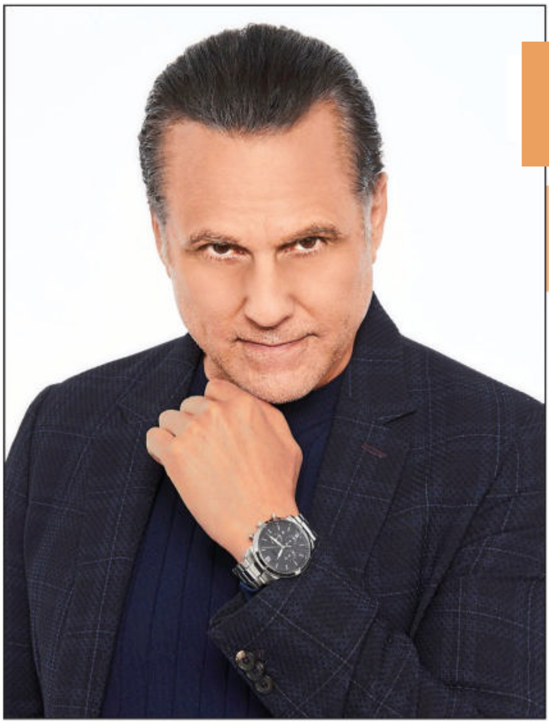
Behind the scenes of Luke and Laura's wedding, 1981
"I remember sitting there and feeling, you know, quite pleased with myself that the worst of it was over and I could just sit on this funny piece of equipment and be silly for a moment. That's how I remember it."

JILL JOHNSON/JPI

Winning her Daytime Emmy for Outstanding Supporting Actress, 2007
"I was absolutely shocked. I just couldn't believe that I actually won! I think I blurted out everything that I wanted to say [and] to receive a standing ovation by that group of people was astounding. The funny part is, I didn't even know that happened until afterward; I have a memory of people standing, but you can't see that deep into the crowd because of all the lights. When it was over, people pulled me aside and said, 'Do you realize everybody in the room stood?!' "

ABC

Laura receives congratulations from — (from l.) Elizabeth (Rebecca Herbst), Franco (Roger Howarth), Aiden (Jason David), Jake (Hudson West), Lulu (Emme Rylan) and Cameron (William Lipton) — on the day that she is sworn in as the mayor of Port Charles, 2019
"What she does at her inauguration, when she swears in as Laura Webber [her maiden name], that was just a brilliant idea that they had. It gave me chills. What's special about that moment is that you see the character step into her own power, away from Luke, away from whatever other man she was with or whatever coupling she was in. That girl that we all watched grow up from early childhood, early teenager-hood, you see her become a mature woman who owns herself."


RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC

MAURICE Benard

(Sonny Corinthos, 1993-97, 1998-present)

After a three-year run as Nico on ALL MY CHILDREN, Maurice Benard set his sights on film and prime-time — until a two-hour meeting about a possible short-term gig on GH changed the course of Port Charles history, and his own.

Let's take it back to 1993. What did you think when GH first approached you about the possibility of coming aboard? "Well, I was broke! I didn't want to do a soap because I felt like that would be going backward and failing, and then my wife reminded me that we're broke [*laughs*]. So, I took the meeting with Wendy [Riche, then-executive producer] and Shelley [Curtis, then-producer/director] and to make a long story short, they offered me two roles, one long-term, one short-term. I said, 'What's the short-term role?' Damian [ultimately played by Leigh McCloskey] was for two years, and the other character was Sonny. I said, 'Sonny's a cool name. How long is that one? Six months? All right, I'll take Sonny.' And that's what happened. And then three weeks into the gig, I had my third nervous breakdown, manic episode, whatever you want to call it, and I quit the show."

When you look back on that now, what stands out to you about how the people at the show responded? "People understand mental illness better now. At that time, they didn't. So, they could have fired me. They probably *should* have fired me, because who starts a job and then quits? But when I came back, they held my hand. Shelley was in the room with me and I was crying like a baby and I couldn't remember a fricking line. I had no confidence. I said, 'I can't do it.' And she said, 'We'll go page by page, word by word, if we have to.' She walked me upstairs [to the soundstage] like it was *Dead Man Walking*, you know? I don't know how I did it, man, I really don't. I had pages and pages, because I had to [film] what I had not done for the week-and-a-half that I was out; it wasn't like going up and doing one page. But I did it! And every day, it got a little easier."

As time went on, how did you find Sonny's voice? "Well, I had an incredible executive producer, Wendy Riche, and an incredible head writer, Claire Labine. When I first came on, this guy was *hated*. You couldn't do what Sonny did then, now — making Karen a stripper, having sex with her. People hated me! But guess what? Great writing, and I could act the hell out of it, so I was in it! I knew when I came on that I was going to play a form of Columbo, Robert De Niro in *New York, New York* and Al Pacino in *The Godfather*. I wanted to combine all three of them — and a little bit of *Billy Jack* — into this character. And then I said, 'You know, I like it here, so what do I do [to stay longer]?' So I decided to show Sonny's vulnerability. There's a scene I'll never forget. We're sitting on the couch and [Karen] is crying, telling me she was abused. Maurice — because I was having a breakdown — at that moment, realized that *I* was abused. So the audience watching is confused, because they're feeling for the bad guy. And they should have, because I was going through it [*laughs*]! She's crying on my lap, I'm crying inside. That's kind of weird for the bad guy, right? But that's how it started to change."

What do you remember about signing your first long-term contract? "Tony [Geary, ex-Luke] and I were in my [dressing] room and he said, 'Do you want to be the Tonto to my Lone Ranger?' 'Uh, you know, Tony, you're great, man. I kind of don't want to be Tonto, but it's all right.' He goes, 'No, it's not. Go upstairs and tell them you want a family and you want a girl.' So I did! My contract was up, so I sat down with Claire and her son [Matt Labine, then-associate head writer] and Wendy, and I said, 'My contract's up. If you guys don't want to do this, you don't have to, I'll leave, but I dig it here and I'm having a good time. So I think you should maybe give him a family and a girl.' And they did."

Which led to a turning point for the character: helping Ms. Brenda Barrett with her suitcase. "Yeah. I remember Vanessa [Marcil, ex-Brenda] coming to me and she goes, 'Oh, man, I would really want to work with you,' and I said, 'Oh, I'd love to [work] with you.' She was young with those big eyes and they put us together and I thought, 'Okay, cool,' but she wasn't as good as she obviously became. We were on a plane coming back from [GH's location shoot in] Puerto Rico and I said, 'Do

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Maurice Benard reflects on profound moments in Sonny's life and his own career.

PHOTOS: ABC

The AIDS storyline featuring Robin (Kimberly McCullough) and Stone (Michael Sutton), 1995
"That was the first time that I could really show Sonny's vulnerability that way. The story was incredible — that was like a really good movie every day, the way it was filmed, the writing, the acting. It was beautiful. What can I say? It broke your heart. It broke my heart."

The early days of Sonny and Jason (Steve Burton), 1996
"I saw a scene of Steve's and I said, 'This guy has depth, and he's pouring Lila coffee all the time!' I sat him down and said, 'They're wasting your talent here. ' I said, 'Maybe we can do a story. Let me get in there with you.' And he worked hard. He would come to my house, we'd rehearse. It was amazing."

you want to be a good actress or a great actress?' She said, 'I want to be a great actress.' I said, 'You don't have to' — I don't like forcing anybody to do anything — 'but if you allow me to help you, I can get you there.' And she was so happy and cool and we worked our asses off and I was like a proud dad, man. I saw her getting better and better. I remember scenes [when our characters] were breaking up and she freaking *nailed* it and I said, 'Go fly, man. You don't need me! You've got to continue to do what you're doing and don't go backward.' She was incredible."

Was it frustrating after she left that the audience had a hard time accepting Sonny with anyone else? "As I always say, the audience is like my mother. No one's good enough for Sonny! Luckily for me, I've had two couples that were very popular, which doesn't happen very often. It's very difficult. After Vanessa, I couldn't pay a million dollars to have another successful couple!"

The tide turned with Sonny and Carly, first played by Sarah Brown. "She was just a freak of nature at her age, acting-wise. She was helping *me*! It just worked. I didn't think it was gonna work, but it did, and I think it's a testament to the kind of actress she is."

Then Tamara Braun took over. "Tamara, she won the fans over with vulnerability. She was also a very hard worker and we spent time working on things, but she had a vulnerability that was second to none, and that made it work, thank God, because at first, the fans didn't want [a recast]. But they got won over, and it rolled. It was really great."

And since 2005, you've been working opposite Laura Wright as Carly. "Laura came in knowing exactly what she wanted, knowing exactly what she was going to do, and she accomplished it, gangbusters. She and I have never argued in 17 years, which is amazing. The fans are completely into it. Laura is the kind of actress who does whatever they ask of her and makes it better, which is always a good thing. They say, 'Jump off a roof,' she just jumps off it, you know? Whereas I go, 'Uh-uh, I don't think Sonny would....' It's been very successful and I'm grateful."

What do you think becoming a father has meant to the evolution of Sonny? "It brought another dimension to him. He's a loyal family man and he'll kill you if you mess with his kids and I think people gravitate to that gangster thing where somebody can be real tough but when it comes to his little girl, he becomes a different person. And now he has, I don't even know how many kids [*laughs*]. People always ask me! Is it five?"

It is! Have you ever felt that "Sonny is a mobster" is a storyline albatross because it's hard to keep finding new rivals for him, hard to keep telling new mob stories? "Yeah. Here's the thing. No one told those stories like Bob [Guza, former head writer]. It was like movie stuff, right? The problem is, the audience — and you know how much I love the audience, they are the most loyal audience in history — when I was doing that stuff, it was, 'Enough! Enough with the violence, enough with the shootings!' Even though it was so well-done, anything you do too long, it seems like they start saying, 'Stop it!' And now that we haven't had that, they want it. And I want it! And I think it's happening now. But, damned if you do, damned if you don't, right?"

Who do you think have been the most successful challengers to Sonny in the mob sphere or the law enforcement sphere? "Réal [Andrews, Taggert] is one who really came in with an intensity and a connection and I liked it a lot. He's scary-looking with that bald head of his!"

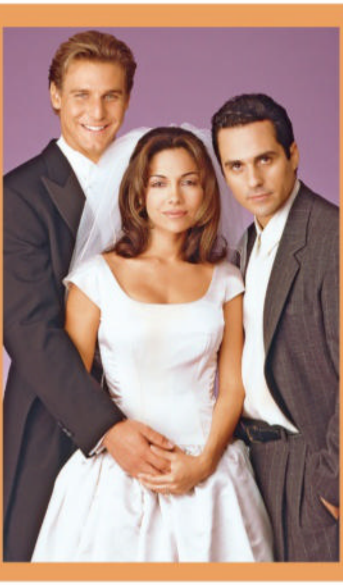
Have you ever rubbed it? "Oh, yeah. He's cool with that!"

Okay, continue. "Sebastian Roché [ex-Jerry], the guy that kidnapped us at the Metro Court, he was another one. Ted King [ex-Luis/Lorenzo] had a certain presence that I didn't appreciate at the time, but I appreciate now. Those are the three that come to mind first."

You did some of the best work in your career, and won two more Daytime Emmys, for the story of Sonny losing his father, Mike, to Alzheimer's. "When I did the audition with Max [Gail, ex-Mike], he kissed me on the forehead at the end of the audition and he left the room and I went to the wall and started bawling. I told Frank [Valentini, executive producer], 'I don't want to do this, man.' He goes, 'What do you mean?' 'I don't want to go through this.' He goes, 'Well, you're gonna have to, that's why we pay you.' 'Oh, yeah!' They hired Max, he was incredible, and my dad had Alzheimer's, so here I am, acting with Max. I said to myself, 'Don't act, just say the lines. Don't push anything at all.' But what was happening was, my life was imitating art. My dad didn't die when Mike died, my dad died when Lenny died, from Nixon Falls. My dad died of the same thing that Lenny died from, liver cancer. So, listen. The Mike story was the best thing I've ever done."

As GH is turning 60, you're approaching your own 30th anniversary with the show. When you think about all that has come with it — your popularity, Emmys, your platform as a mental health advocate — what comes to mind? "It's funny. When I think of 30 years, I think, 'I've been able to provide for my family for 30 years.' I don't think about Emmys or STATE OF MIND [his YouTube series about mental health], I think of 30 years of being able to work to give my family what they want. I don't think I would have given you that answer five years ago, to be honest with you. And I'm not just saying it because my wife's in the room [*laughs*]!"

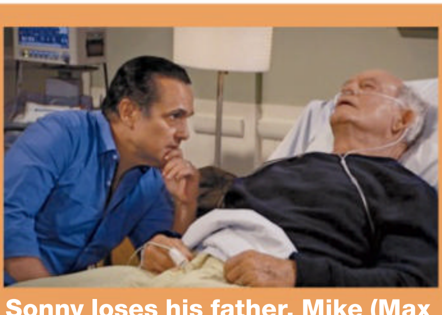
What does the show's 60-year milestone mean to you? "It's very simple: GENERAL HOSPITAL fans are the most loyal fans in history. It's unbelievable. I don't think this show can ever get off the air! I really don't! It's a family fan base, they've been with us 60 years, and we just keep going because these fans are incredible. I've had this connection with the fans from the beginning, and they've never failed me."



The wildly popular love triangle of Sonny, Brenda (Vanessa Marcil) and Jax (Ingo Rademacher), 1996
"That worked so well because Ingo can act — even if, at that time, you thought he couldn't because he was so pretty and good-looking, the reality was, he could deliver, and the way he looked was so opposite of me. He's a tall dude with blue eyes and blond hair and I'm a little guy with brown eyes, black hair. It just worked, man! It was fun, too."

JOHN PASCHAL/JPI

Winning his first Daytime Emmy for Outstanding Lead Actor, 2003
"I was always trying to chase winning an Emmy, so my acting was always a little pushed," he admits. "I was trying [too] hard."

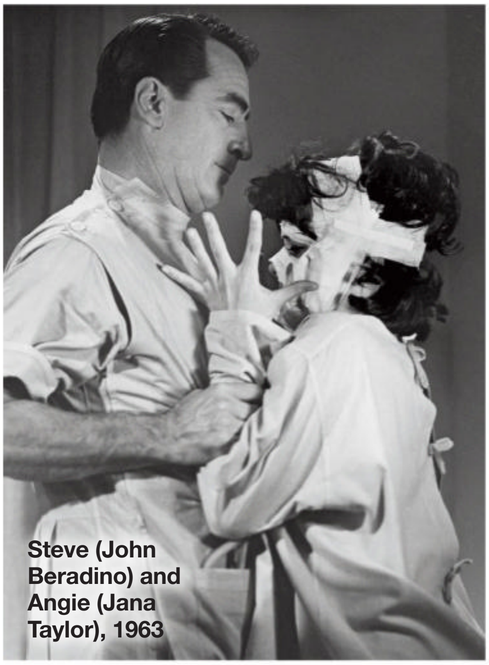


Sonny loses his father, Mike (Max Gail), to Alzheimer's, 2020
"Max was so friggin' good. He looked like my dad, they dressed him like my dad. I was like, 'This is too much!' [Playing that storyline] was so painful in my heart, it wasn't even acting."

GH TIMELINE

Story highlights from 60 years of Port Charles.

PHOTOS: ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES



Steve (John Beradino) and Angie (Jana Taylor), 1963

1963: Steve treats his first G.H. patient, Angie, the victim of a car crash caused by her beau, Eddie. Phil cheats on wife Jessie with Cynthia. Steve's fiancée, Peggy, dumps him over his workaholism.

1964: After a fling with Priscilla, Steve courts Audrey, as does wealthy Randy Washburn. She chooses Steve after battling lymphoma. Jessie retracts her divorce papers when she learns she's pregnant, but miscarries.

1965: Steve and Audrey marry. Angie and Eddie wed. Phil rapes and impregnates Jessie.

1966: Lee marries Meg after her fiancé, Noel, confesses that he's in love with her daughter, Brooke. Lee adopts Meg's son, Scotty. Jessie and Phil's baby, Nancy, dies and they divorce.

1967: Jessie weds Dr. John Prentice, to the dismay of his daughter, Polly. John dies and Jessie is convicted of his murder, but Phil helps exonerate her. Phil and Jessie reconcile.

1968: Steve threatens to quit when board members attempt to block his hiring of a Black female surgeon, Tracy Adams. Phil and Jessie split after he cheats with Polly. Audrey and Steve divorce.

1969: Audrey marries Tom Baldwin, who rapes and impregnates her. Polly and her unborn baby (who she claimed was Phil's) perish in a car wreck. Phil is presumed dead in a plane crash. Jessie weds Peter. Lee donates a kidney to ailing Scott, mending his troubled marriage to Meg. Nurse Jane weds hospital administrator Howie.

1970: Nurse Lucille, Audrey's older sis, falls for janitor Al. Alive but amnesiac and going by the name Harold, Phil takes up with Diana. He recovers his memories and reconciles with Jessie. Meg battles breast cancer and has a mental breakdown; heartbroken Lee has her institutionalized.

1971: Audrey fibs that her son, Tommy, was stillborn, planning to remarry Steve and "adopt" her own child with him. The scheme unravels when Audrey is accused of murdering Tommy's blackmailing nanny, Peggy. Pregnant by Phil, Diana weds Peter, then births a son, Tracy, who dies of pneumonia. Jim performs life-saving surgery on Tommy; grateful Audrey marries him.

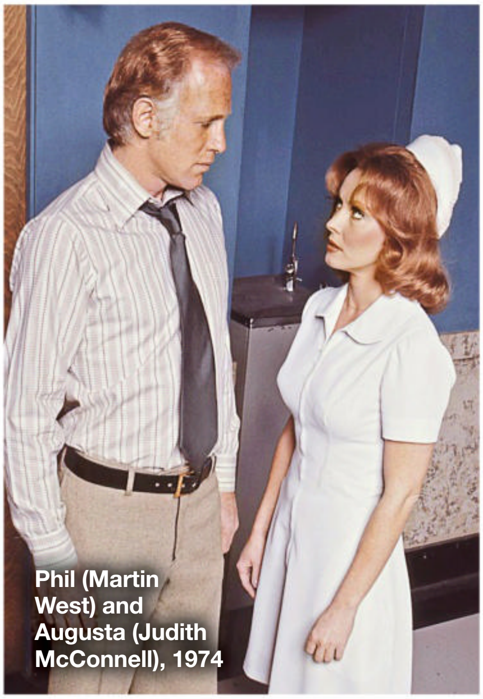
1972: Phil rapes and impregnates Diana, who passes off her baby girl, Martha, as Peter's. Tom kidnaps Tommy, then dies. Howie cheats on Jane with Brooke. Jim descends into alcoholism. Sleazy Teddy courts Jessie, then skips town with her niece.

1973: Howie is a suspect when Brooke is murdered; the true culprit, Brooke's jilted beau, Burt, is exposed. Lesley joins the G.H. staff. Phil takes up with Augusta.

COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION

Randy (Mark Miller) and Audrey (Rachel Ames), 1964

Tracy (Kim Hamilton) and Steve, 1969



Phil (Martin West) and Augusta (Judith McConnell), 1974

Barbara (Judy Lewis) and Laura (Stacey Baldwin), 1975

Lesley (Denise Alexander) and Cameron (Don Matheson), 1976

ABC

1974: Lucille and Al marry. Jane divorces Howie and rebounds with Henry. Augusta murders Phil with a paperweight to stop him from telling Diana that Augusta is pregnant by Diana's husband, Peter. Lesley is shocked to learn that her patient, Florence, is married to Gordon Gray, Lesley's former professor and lover.

1975: Jessie is tried for Phil's murder, but Augusta's guilt is exposed and she goes to prison. Lee marries Caroline Chandler. Lesley weds Cameron and tracks down her birth daughter, Laura, the product of her affair with Gordon, who is being raised by Barbara.

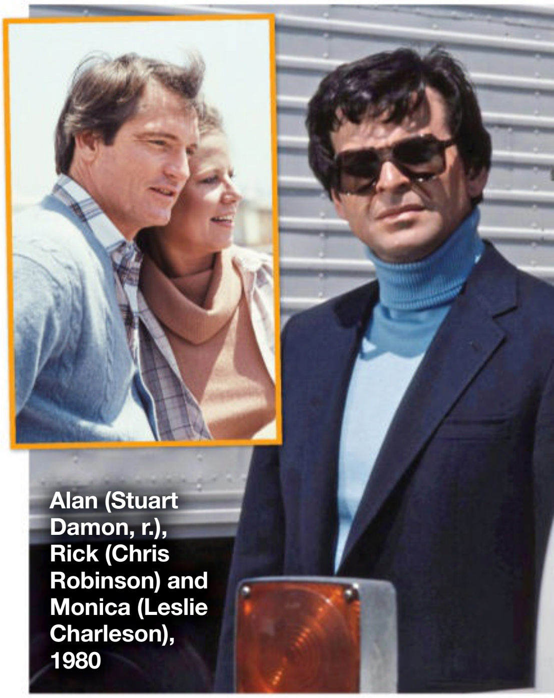
1976: Laura comes to live with Lesley. Cameron rapes Lesley, then dies in a car crash. Jeff's marriage to Monica crumbles when his brother/her former fiancé, Rick, returns from the dead. Diana's new nanny, Heather, seduces Jeff. Steve and Audrey remarry, but Tom's return from the dead invalidates the union.

1977: Steve learns he is Jeff's biological father. Lesley weds Rick after they save Laura from a cult. Lee grieves when Caroline and her son, Bobby, are lost at sea; he gets close to Gail. Scotty courts Laura. Steve and Audrey officially rewed; he adopts Tommy. Diana and Peter unwittingly adopt Heather's secret son by Jeff, Steven Lars, who they dub P.J. Diana is shattered by little Martha's death. Sparks fly between Alan and Monica.

1978: Alan's upper-crust parents, Edward and Lila, and sister Tracy arrive. Adamant that she is over Jeff, Monica marries Alan. Laura accidentally kills older lover David; Lesley takes the rap and goes to jail, but is exonerated. Heather and Jeff wed. Bobbie summons brother Luke to help her steal Scotty from Laura.

1979: A Lassa Fever outbreak in Port Charles prompts Audrey to tell Jeff that Steve is his father. After Bobbie is busted for faking a pregnancy to hold on to Scotty, he weds Laura. Luke manages the Campus Disco for mobster Frank Smith and rapes Laura. Lee weds Gail. Tracy marries mob-connected politician Mitch, then catches him in bed with Susan. Bobbie's past as a hooker is exposed and her new love, Roy, is killed. Heather is institutionalized after overdosing on LSD. Peter learns P.J.'s true identity and has a fatal heart attack. Monica learns she is pregnant after bedding Rick. Delirious after giving birth to Alan, Jr. (A.J.), she blurts out to Lesley that Rick is the dad.

1980: Crazed with jealousy, Alan plots to kill Monica and Rick. Scott foils Luke's wedding to Jennifer, Frank's daughter, upon learning that Luke raped Laura. Luke and Laura go on the run, become lovers, and help send Frank to jail. Edward disinherits Tracy for trying to prove A.J. isn't Alan's, and fakes a heart attack to test her loyalty; she fails. Monica realizes Alan *is* A.J.'s father. Lesley divorces Rick. Jeff falls for Audrey's virginal niece, Anne.



Alan (Stuart Damon, r.), Rick (Chris Robinson) and Monica (Leslie Charleson), 1980

ABC

Scotty (Kin Shriner), 1981

Luke (Anthony Geary), 1982

ABC

Susan (Gail Brown), 1983

ERIK HEIN/ABC

1981: Luke, Laura and WSB Agent Robert's quest for the Ice Princess, the world's largest uncut diamond, pits them against the Cassadines. On Cassadine Island, Luke deactivates the clan's weather-control machine, saving the world. Luke and Laura wed; Helena places a curse on them and a bitter Scotty crashes the reception. Rick and Lesley remarry. Diana stuns Jeff with the news that P.J. is Steven Lars. Heather frames Anne for Diana's murder by writing her name in the victim's blood. The real killer is Heather's mother, Alice. Alan's mistress, Susan, gives birth to Jason. Bobbie hooks up with surgeon Noah.

1982: Laura is presumed dead after disappearing into the fog, thanks to David Grey. Luke and reporter Jackie search for his wife and her missing sister, also named Laura. Grey dies during a confrontation with Luke when he is overpowered by the mystical Sword of Malkuth. Alan and Monica reconcile. Scotty beds Heather, then weds Susan in hopes of getting his hands on Jason's hefty trust fund. Luke takes up with con artist Holly. Rick and Lesley take in troubled teen Blackie.

1983: While Luke is presumed dead in an avalanche, Robert splits from Jackie and enters into a green-card marriage with Holly; they fall in love. Bryan and Claudia wed. Edward's illegitimate son, Jimmy Lee Holt, arrives. Susan is murdered by Lila's first husband, Crane Tolliver. Edward's niece, Celia, marries Grant despite her pull to Jimmy Lee, and stands by him after learning that Grant is actually a secret agent for the nefarious DVX. Laura returns (she'd been kidnapped by Stavros Cassadine and forced to marry him) after Luke bests Lee in the mayoral election; they leave town. Rick and Lesley adopt young Mike.

1984: The real Grant Putnam seeks revenge against his impostor; he is caught and shipped off to an asylum. Bobbie's new husband, D.L. Brock, becomes abusive. Bobbie's aunt Ruby takes over Kelly's. Lesley dies in a car wreck. Rick weds Mike's biological mother, Ginny. Religious differences break up Catholic Rose and Jewish Jake. Blackie goes to jail for manslaughter; his bandmate, Frisco, falls in love with Felicia while they search for her heirloom Aztec treasure. Robert, Luke and Laura assist, and Robert brings in backup in the form of his former WSB chief, Sean Donely, who has his own designs on the treasure.

1985: The arrival of Robert's ex-wife, Anna, and surprise daughter Robin causes trouble in his marriage to Holly. Tony and Tania wed. Bobbie is charged with D.L.'s murder; the true culprit is Ginny. Robin is kidnapped by evildoers in P.C.'s Asian Quarter, home to the Wu mob. Celia divorces Grant and weds Jimmy Lee.

1986: Monica has a fling with Sean. Alan fakes his death and hides out in Pautuck. Divorced from Celia, Jimmy Lee marries Charity. Lila revives the Quartermaines' flagging fortunes with her hit relish, Pickle-Lila. Brock's daughter, Terry, weds Kevin O'Connor, a killer in league with librarian/secret sexpot Lucy; he plunges to his death. Tony and Tania welcome daughter B.J. Frisco and Felicia wed. Mobster Duke falls for Anna. Anna's co-police chief, Burt, is revealed as criminal mastermind Mr. Big. Bobbie and Jake marry.

1987: Tania dies in a hit-and-run. Jake cheats on Bobbie with Lucy, who weds Tony. Holly is presumed dead. Duke and Anna marry. DVX operative Elena programs Dusty to kill Terry; he is thwarted.

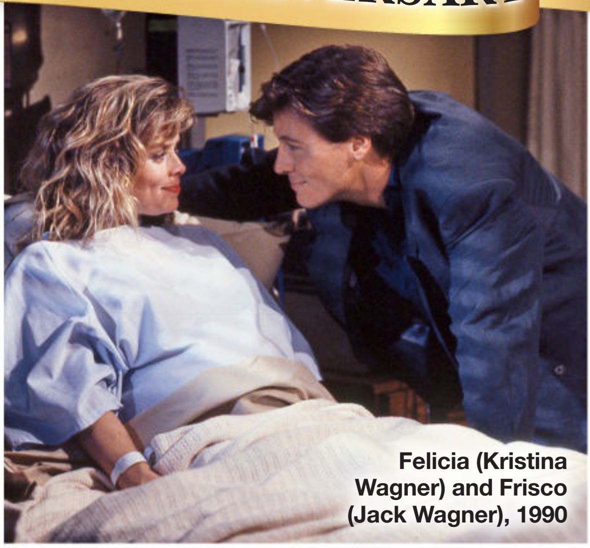
1988: Tom (formerly known as Tommy) and Simone wed. Frisco is presumed dead. Putnam goes on a murderous, hostage-taking rampage, but is recaptured. The Jerome mafia — Victor, Julian and Olivia — cause problems for Anna

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Bobbie (Jacklyn Zeman) and Brock (David Groh), 1984

JERRY FITZGERALD/ABC

Casey (Bradley Lockerman), 1990


Felicia (Kristina Wagner) and Frisco (Jack Wagner), 1990

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

and Duke. Scott beds Bobbie and Lucy. Sean and Tiffany wed. Monica has a fling with Tracy's son, Ned. Robert romances Cheryl, Tiff's sis, then pianist Katherine.

1989: Frisco returns from the dead as Felicia marries Colton, Lucy's cousin. Tony and Bobbie wed after she illegally adopts Lucas, who is actually Cheryl's son by Julian. Duke fakes his death to protect Anna. Edward is presumed dead in a plane crash. Ned courts Dawn, Monica's surprise daughter. Simone is relieved when baby Tommy, Jr. proves to be Tom's, not Harrison's. Lucy rebuffs Victor's advances; he swallows a necklace and dies.

1990: Casey the Alien from the planet Lumina befriends Robin. Frisco and Felicia remarry and welcome baby Maxie. Alan reluctantly weds mistress Lucy. Duke returns with a new face and an alias (Jonathan Paget), then dies in Anna's arms after Julian shoots him; Julian also kills Olivia before he dies, too. Robert and Katherine split. Cesar Faison, a dangerous figure from Anna's past, settles into Wyndemere and wreaks havoc. Dawn annuls her marriage to Ned after discovering his scandalous past with Monica. Tracy becomes CEO of ELQ and Scott's lover.

1991: Jessie passes away. Luke's look-alike cousin, Bill Eckert, and his family are introduced. Robert's brother, Mac, arrives and becomes smitten with Dominique, whose husband, Leopold Taub, is in a cartel with Faison, Paul Hornsby and Harlan Barrett. Paul weds Tracy. Lucy miscarries Scott's baby. Robert and Anna remarry, as do Alan and Monica. A.J. and Jason return from boarding school. Edward returns from the dead. Cheryl reclaims Lucas. Dawn is murdered, crushing fiancé Decker.

1992: Holly returns from the dead. Anna, Robert and Faison are presumed dead in a boat explosion. Lucy launches Deception. Scott and Dominique wed. Cheryl dies; Tony and Bobbie formally adopt Lucas. Paul welcomes son Dillon with Tracy but pines for Ned's bride, Jenny. Karen is torn between Jagger and Jason; Brenda seduces Jagger. A.J. boozes. Psycho Ryan stalks Felicia.

1993: Dominique succumbs to a brain tumor. Surrogate Lucy births Scott and Dom's daughter, Serena. After recalling that she was sexually abused as a child, Karen gets mixed up with mobster Sonny. Luke, Laura and son Lucky flee to Port Charles after vengeful Frank tracks them down in Canada; Bill is mistaken for Luke and shot dead. Ned moonlights as rocker Eddie Maine and falls for manager Lois. Ryan's twin, Kevin, arrives.

1994: Monica battles breast cancer. Bobbie cheats on Tony with Frank's son, Damian. A bomb-wielding Ryan derails Mac and Felicia's wedding. Paul and Jenny marry. Ned elopes with Lois, then submits to family pressure to wed scheming Katherine Bell. Lois busts him as a bigamist. After a school bus crash renders B.J. brain-dead, critically ill Maxie receives her heart. Robin and Stone, Brenda and Sonny, and Kevin and Lucy couple up. Lucy hosts the first Nurses' Ball. Luke offs Frank Smith; he and Laura welcome baby Lesley Lu (Lulu). Mary Mae reveals that Edward sired her late son, Bradley. Karen learns Scott is her biological father; she and Jagger marry and move away.

B.J. (Brighton Hertford) and Tony (Brad Maule), 1994

BOB D'AMICO/ABC

JIM OBER/ABC

Jason (Steve Burton, l.) and A.J. (Sean Kanan), 1995

CATHY BLAIVAS/ABC

Elizabeth (Rebecca Herbst) and Lucky (Jonathan Jackson), 1998

1995: Lois and Ned remarry. Sonny's absentee father, Mike, arrives. Brenda and Sonny split and rebound with Miguel and Lily, respectively. Mary Mae dies. Robin is diagnosed as HIV-positive and Stone succumbs to AIDS. Alan and Monica adopt Emily. Felicia gives birth to Georgie. Ryan dies in a fire. Simone dates Justus, Edward's grandson. A.J.'s drunk driving leaves Jason with catastrophic brain damage.

1996: Jason changes his last name to Morgan and goes to work for Sonny. He and Robin become lovers. Steve dies of a heart attack. Lois and Ned split, but welcome daughter Brook Lynn. Bobbie's secret daughter, Carly, seduces Tony and also sleeps with Jason. Laura's secret son by Stavros, Nikolas, arrives with his uncle, Stefan, who weds Bobbie. Tracy and Jax try to take over ELQ. Brenda elopes with Jax as Sonny's pregnant wife, Lily, dies in a car bomb blast. Sonny brings Jax's not-so-dead first wife, Miranda, to town, invalidating the union. Justus offs Damian.

1997: Stefan and Katherine become lovers. Carly and A.J. conceive Michael; she claims that Tony, then Jason, is the dad. Sonny leaves Brenda at the altar. Monica trysts with evil Dr. Dorman, who gets Em hooked on heroin. Alan gets addicted to pills. Lesley returns from the dead. Audrey takes in Jeff's teen daughters, Sarah and Elizabeth. Alexis finds out she is Stefan's half sister. The source of PCPD Det. Taggert's vendetta against Sonny is revealed: He has a past connection to Sonny's abusive stepfather, Deke.

1998: Tony goes off the deep end and kidnaps Michael. Bobbie finally learns she is Carly's mother. Liz and Lucky get close after she is raped. Lucky learns about Luke raping Laura; a Luke/Laura estrangement ensues, and Stefan courts her. Jax's brother, Jerry, woos Bobbie. Helena is exonerated of Katherine's murder when she turns up alive. Nikolas and Katherine hit the sheets. Mac and Felicia tie the knot. After reconciling with Jax, Brenda is presumed dead.

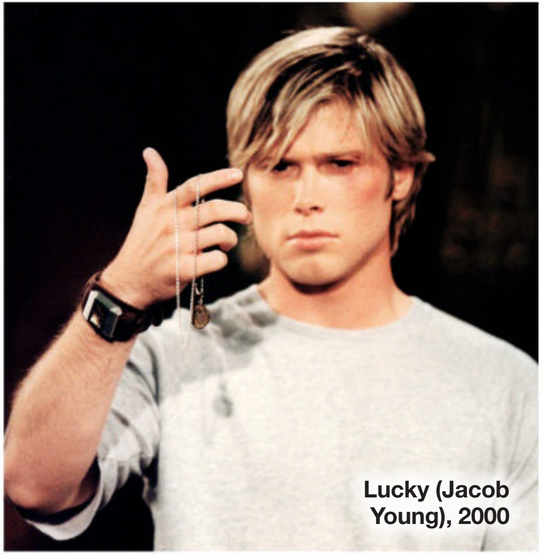
1999: Robin spills that A.J. is Michael's father; she and Jason split. Ruby dies. Lucky is presumed dead in a fire (really, Faison snatches him and teams up with Helena). Carly weds A.J. to secure custody of Michael. Katherine is fatally shoved off the Wyndemere parapet. Bobbie almost weds Jerry and reunites with back-from-the-dead Roy. Nikolas learns that Stavros is his father, after all. Lily and Miguel's son, Juan, arrives. Jax and Alexis, and Ned and Chloe (Lila's distant cousin), wed to help Chloe keep her inheritance. Liz and Jason get close; Sonny and Carly hit the sheets.

2000: Lucky returns, brainwashed by Faison. Laura dumps Stefan. Luke and Felicia sleep together and Mac files for divorce. Sonny forces A.J. to relinquish custody of Michael to Carly, who miscarries Sonny's baby in a scuffle with A.J. Sonny and Carly wed so that she won't have to testify against him on drug trafficking charges. Alexis leaves Ned at the altar. Laura and Carly become partners in Deception.

2001: Luke and Laura divorce; she reconnects with Scott. Robin and back-from-the-dead Anna reunite (on ALL MY CHILDREN). Emily jilts Juan in favor of Zander. Sonny adopts Michael, but he and Carly divorce when she colludes with the FBI to extract him from the mob. Sonny meets his half sister, Courtney. Nikolas and Gia get engaged. Alan discovers that he has an adult daughter, Skye. Helena forces Tony to reanimate cryogenically frozen Stavros, who dies in a struggle with Luke. Liz calls off her wedding to Lucky when she realizes he doesn't remember his love for her.

2002: Brenda returns from the dead after Sonny remarries Carly, and Jax weds Skye. Luke and Laura plan to remarry, but she has a breakdown and is institutionalized after accidentally killing Rick Webber. A.J.'s new wife, Courtney, dumps him for stalking her, then beds Jason. Alexis births Kristina, who is secretly Sonny's daughter. Lucky sleeps

TOM QUEALLY/ABC



Lucky (Jacob Young), 2000

with Sarah and Liz kisses Jason. When mobster Luis Alcazar is murdered, Jason and Brenda marry so they don't have to testify against each other.

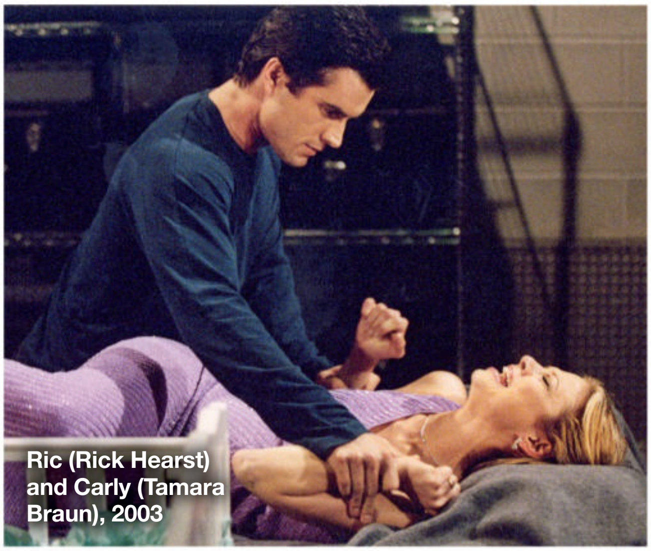
2003: Jax leaves Brenda at the altar. Emily battles breast cancer. Alexis is revealed as Alcazar's killer; Ric is revealed as Sonny's half brother; his accomplice, Faith, wreaks havoc. Alcazar's twin, Lorenzo, arrives. Tracy learns Alan is not Skye's bio dad (Alan later adopts her). Jason weds Courtney; Liz weds Ric, who holds pregnant Carly hostage in a panic room. Sonny accidentally shoots Carly in the head while delivering their son, Morgan. Stefan dies in a struggle with Luke. Georgie and Dillon couple up. Emily weds Zander. Sam arrives.

2004: Zander dies; Liz gives birth to his son, Cameron. Lila passes away. Emily and Nikolas marry. Sonny impregnates Sam; baby Lila doesn't make it. Sam and Jason grow close. Ric marries Alexis. Sonny learns that he sired Kristina, who battles leukemia. Amnesiac Nik is held hostage by look-alike Connor's crazed wife, Mary. Heather drugs Edward into marriage and winds up in Ferncliff. Jax woos Courtney. Steve (formerly known as Steven Lars), Lois and Brook Lynn return. Carly finds her birth father, John Durant.

2005: Ric and Alexis welcome daughter Molly. Luke weds Tracy. Connor rapes Emily, who subsequently shoots him dead; she and Nikolas split. After kidnapping Michael and shooting Alan, A.J. dies. Carly is briefly wed to Alcazar. Faith is shot dead. Liz and Lucky marry. Sonny gets involved with Reese (who is really Charlotte, a face from Carly's past), who is killed. Sam and Jason get engaged. Dillon and Georgie become lovers. Jax and Courtney wed, but she falls for Nik, while Em falls for Sonny.

2006: Lucas comes out to his family. Tony and Courtney die during an encephalitis outbreak. A back-from-the-dead Robert has an adventure on the Markham Islands with Luke, Anna and Holly in pursuit of the antidote. Georgie and Dillon are briefly wed. Pregnant by Dillon, Lulu has an abortion. Jax passes off Courtney's son by Nik as his own, but Robin outs baby Spencer's true paternity. Maxie's cop beau, Jesse, dies in the line of duty. Sonny and Emily become lovers and he is diagnosed as bipolar. Skye births Lorenzo's daughter, Lila Rae. Laura wakes up and remarries Luke (it's invalid), then re-enters a catatonic state. Robin couples up with Noah's son, Patrick. Lucky gets hooked on painkillers and sleeps with Maxie, who fakes a pregnancy to hold on to him. Alexis and Sam learn they are mother and daughter. Evil Manny murders Justus and targets Sam; Jason breaks things off to try to protect her. Sam seduces Ric as Alexis battles lung cancer. Liz gets pregnant by Jason.

2007: Carly is briefly remarried to Sonny, then weds Jax. "Mr. Craig" (revealed to be Jerry) takes a slew of hostages at the Metro Court. Alan passes away and haunts Tracy when she doctors his will. Lulu discovers that it was Scott who killed Rick. Liz births Jake and passes him off as Lucky's son. They remarry, but split when Jake's paternity is revealed. Lucky and Sam hook up. Jason offs Alcazar. Scott learns he has an adult son, Logan. Mafioso Anthony Zacchara wreaks havoc. The Text Message Killer murders Emily and Georgie.



Ric (Rick Hearst) and Carly (Tamara Braun), 2003

SCOTT GARFIELD/ABC

Jax (Ingo Rademacher, l.) and Jerry (Sebastian Roché), 2007

RON TOM/ABC

RON TOM/ABC

Sonny (Maurice Benard) and Claudia (Sarah Brown), 2008

PAUL SKIPPER/JPI

Robin (Kimberly McCullough, l.) and Obrecht (Kathleen Gati), 2012

ABC

Edward and Lila, 2012

2008: Monica battles the bottle. Alcazar's son, Diego, is exposed as the Text Message Killer and dies. Michael is shot and rendered comatose. Jason and Liz are briefly engaged. Maxie and Spinelli couple up. Lulu kills Logan in self-defense and has a mental breakdown. Sonny's wedding to Kate is interrupted when Anthony shoots the bride. Kate's cousin, Olivia, arrives with a secret: She bore Sonny's son, Dante, years ago. Sonny marries Anthony's daughter, Claudia, to secure control of the Zacchara organization. Alexis and Jerry become lovers. Robin and Patrick wed and welcome baby Emma. Laura goes to France for treatment; Scott follows. Tracy dumps Luke.

2009: Luke's surprise son by Holly, Ethan, arrives. Liz cheats on Lucky with Nikolas, who is briefly linked to Emily's surprise twin, Rebecca. Kristina is physically abused by beau Kiefer. Dante goes undercover in Sonny's organization, unaware Sonny is his biological father. Maxie and Spinelli's nuptials turn into a festive "nonwedding". Homicidal artist Franco guns for Jason. Jason and Sam rekindle their flame. Olivia hooks up with Johnny Zacchara. Michael emerges from his coma and kills Claudia to protect Carly and her newborn daughter by Jax, Josslyn.

2010: Sonny learns Dante is his son after shooting him. Michael is raped in prison. Lucky finds out about Liz and Nikolas; she gives birth to Aiden and thinks Nik is the father, thanks to Helena. Patrick cheats on Robin with pyscho ex Lisa. Tracy and Luke remarry after he admits their first union wasn't valid. Maxie dates Patrick's brother, Matt. Franco's reign of terror seemingly ends at Jason's hands. Brenda returns, in danger from a criminal mastermind known as The Balkan (revealed to be attorney Theo Hoffman). Lucky falls for Siobhan. Ethan and Maya (Edward's great-granddaughter) drunkenly wed in Vegas.

2011: Brenda and Sonny wed, then split; she goes to Rome with son Alec and he reconciles with Kate. Jason and Sam marry; so do Lucky and Siobhan, and Lulu and Dante. Nik and Brook Lynn have a fling. Liz learns that Lucky is Aiden's father. Drunken Luke kills Jake in a hit-and-run. Joss receives a life-saving kidney transplant, presumably from Jake. Lisa is murdered. Luke and Tracy divorce. Franco returns and seemingly rapes Sam. Jax and Carly split. Kristina crushes on Ethan. The Balkan is offed by his wife, Suzanne. Steve and Olivia couple up. Anthony murders Siobhan; grieving Lucky relapses, then moves to Ireland. Michael's girlfriend, Abby, dies.

2012: Jason kills Franco. Robin is presumed dead in a lab explosion; really, she's taken hostage by Faison with help from Dr. Obrecht, who renders Robert comatose. Heather and Todd steal Sam and Jason's newborn son, but they eventually reunite with little Danny. Anna and Luke have a fling. Jason is presumed dead after being shot by Faison, who poses as Duke. The real Duke returns from the dead, as does A.J. Jerry poisons P.C.'s water supply. Edward passes away. Michael and Starr fall for each other; so do Carly and Todd, Starr's father. Johnny kills Anthony after he blackmails Tracy into marriage. Thanks to Heather, Olivia overdoses on LSD. Maxie is briefly wed to Matt, who goes to jail for killing Lisa. Spinelli and Ellie couple up; so do Molly and TJ, while Alexis briefly dates TJ's uncle, Shawn. Kate's alternate personality, Connie, wreaks havoc.

2013: A.J. and Tracy vie for control of ELQ with competing relish recipes. Johnny goes to prison. Laura and Scott briefly remarry. Frisco makes a play for Felicia, but she remarries Mac. Maxie and Spinelli's daughter, Georgie, is born. Sabrina revives the Nurses' Ball. Back-from-the-dead Julian is revealed to be Sam's bio dad. His sister, Ava, and Kiki, Ava's daughter by Sam's new squeeze, Silas, arrive. Ava frames A.J. for

Spencer (Nicolas Bechtel, l.) and Nikolas (Tyler Christopher), 2015

HOWARD WISE/JPI

Connie's murder. Morgan beds Ava after Kiki chooses Michael over him. Britt (Obrecht's daughter) impregnates herself with a Lulu/Dante embryo; after Patrick dumps her, she takes up with Nikolas. Franco returns from the dead, has his brain tumor removed, learns he is Heather and Scott's son and becomes Carly's lover. Robert emerges from his coma. Robin returns during Patrick and Sabrina's wedding. Helena poisons Luke, who shoots her dead; he also kills Stavros (again). Olivia and Steve split when he goes to jail for killing a patient.

2014: Nik dumps Britt over her baby deception; Dante and Lulu reclaim their son, Rocco. Maxie gets together with cop Nathan, Obrecht's son. Obrecht kills Victor Cassadine after he forces Robin to leave town to de-freeze Helena, Stavros and Jason. Patrick and Sabrina's son, Gabriel, dies. Sam splits from Silas after his wife, Nina, emerges from a decades-long coma. Kevin and Lucy divorce over her affair with Scott, who rekindles his flame with Bobbie. Duke and Anna split. Epiphany dates Milo. Alexis and Julian become lovers. A man who seems to be posing as Luke conspires with Helena, Faison, Jerry and Julian, and dupes Tracy into marriage. TJ's mother, Jordan, infiltrates the Jeromes and hooks up with Shawn. Liz is drawn to amnesiac "Jake" — who is really Jason, brainwashed by Helena to commit crimes on her behalf. Ava cheats on Morgan with Sonny, resulting in Avery, who Nina kidnaps. Sonny kills A.J. to avenge Connie; Carly helps him conceal it and they have an affair. When Franco exposes them, Michael cuts his ties to Sonny. Robert and Anna imprison Faison at Wyndemere; Faison and daughter Britt then go on the run.

2015: Nina and Franco couple up. Ric pays Hayden to pose as "Jake's" wife to keep "Jake" and Liz apart. Liz learns that "Jake" is Jason and keeps mum. Nik orders a hit on Hayden; Shawn takes the fall for the shooting and goes to jail. TJ's uncle, Curtis, arrives. Olivia births Julian's son Leo. Spencer almost dies in a fire. Ava fakes her death and poses as Ava's twin, "Denise". Carlos fatally shoots Duke on orders from Julian; Anna shoots Carlos in retaliation. Ric marries Nina to get his hands on her fortune; he fails. Nina's mom, Madeline, murders Silas. "Fake Luke" proves to be the actual Luke; the cause of his psychological splintering is buried childhood trauma (he was responsible for killing both his parents). Not-so-dead Frank Smith kidnaps Lucky and Ethan; Laura, Luke and Holly ride to the rescue, and Luke kills Frank (again). Luke finds little Jake very much alive on Cassadine Island and brings him home to Liz. Helena dies (again and for keeps). Dante cheats on Lulu with her cousin, Valerie. Sonny and Carly remarry. Morgan is diagnosed as bipolar. Carly uncovers "Jake's" true identity, derailing his wedding to Liz — and Sam's engagement to Patrick.

2016: Robin and Patrick remarry and move to Berkeley. Brad and Lucas wed, as do Jason and Sam. Liz and Franco fall in love, as do Laura and Kevin. Nik and Hayden elope; Hayden and Liz learn they share a father, Jeff. Kristina falls for her female professor, Parker. TJ learns Shawn is his biological father. Duke's surprise son, Griffin, arrives. Lulu learns that her stolen embryo resulted in a shared daughter with Valentin Cassadine, Charlotte. Nik is presumed dead at Valentin's hands. Valentin weds Nina. Alexis divorces Julian after he murders Carlos; she develops a drinking problem. Paul Hornsby murders Michael's new love, Sabrina. Carly locates Joss's kidney donor, devious Nelle, who has it in for Carly. After Ava replaces Morgan's lithium with placebos, he is killed by a bomb intended for Julian.

Shawn (Sean Blakemore, l.), TJ (Tequan Richmond) and Jordan (Vinessa Antoine), 2015

XJ JOHNSON/JPI

Sam (Kelly Monaco), Drew (Billy Miller, c.) and Jason (Steve Burton), 2017

XJ JOHNSON/JPI

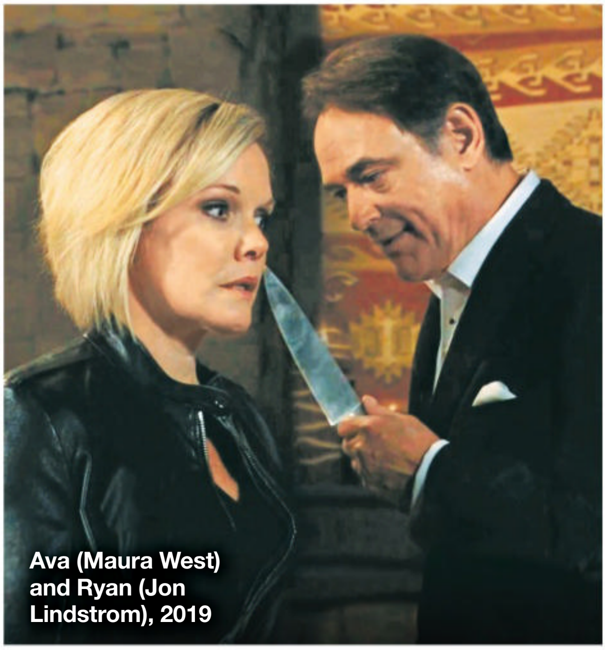
2017: Sam and Jason welcome daughter Emily Scout. Maxie and Nathan wed, as do Ned and Olivia, and Laura and Kevin. Nelle is exposed as the biological daughter of Carly's adoptive father, Frank Benson, who sold her kidney to Jax. Carly briefly reunites with Jax, then reconciles with Sonny. Michael impregnates Nelle. Tracy moves to Amsterdam and reunites with Luke. Back-from-the-dead Olivia Jerome is revealed as the mastermind behind Morgan's demise. Anna's twin, Alex, temporarily assumes her identity. Dillon and Kiki split. Andre and Jordan split; she dates Curtis. Hayden breaks her engagement to newly sober Finn and flees, secretly pregnant. Lee Baldwin and Jane Jacks pass away. An illness causes Sam to hallucinate and shoot Sonny; they both recover. Ava's face is severely burned in a fire. Undergoing reconstructive surgery in Russia, she meets the mysterious "Patient 6" — who is actually the real Jason! Andre confesses that he mapped Jason's memories onto the man Sam married, who is Jason's surprise twin, Drew. Josslyn's new beau, Oscar, turns out to be Drew's son by ex Kim. Ava and Griffin become lovers.

2018: Faison fatally shoots surprise son Nathan, then is killed by Jason. Peter is revealed to be Anna and Faison's secret son. Maxie births Nathan's son, James. Valentin taps Sasha to pose as Nina's long-lost daughter. Sonny cares for Alzheimer's-stricken Mike. Brad passes off Nelle and Michael's newborn as the baby he and Lucas were poised to adopt (who is the biological child of Willow and Shiloh) when that infant passes away. Nelle goes to jail. Not-so-dead Ryan takes Kevin hostage and assumes his identity. He murders Kiki and beds Ava. Jordan and Curtis wed. Sam weds Drew, but they split over her pull to Jason.

2019: Laura is elected mayor and busts Ryan for taking over Kevin's life; Ava is gutted to learn she's been sleeping with the enemy. Franco and Liz wed. Nina dumps Valentin over his Sasha deception. Lucy and Sasha reboot Deception. Sam infiltrates Dawn of Day to rescue Kristina from cult leader Shiloh, and goes to jail after killing him in self-

(From l.) Felicia, Maxie (Kirsten Storms), Mac (John J. York) and Nathan (Ryan Paevey), 2018

ABC


Ava (Maura West) and Ryan (Jon Lindstrom), 2019

ABC

defense. Cancer fells Oscar; Drew is presumed dead. Sonny and Carly welcome baby Donna. Anna gets engaged to Finn, who takes in his surprise daughter by Hayden, Violet. Ava blackmails back-from-the-dead Nikolas into marriage.

2020: Taggert returns and has a warm reunion with daughter Trina. The Corinthoses mourn Mike. Alexis's new lover, Neil, dies. The truth about baby Wiley ends Brad and Lucas's marriage. Michael reclaims Wiley and Willow adopts him. After Nelle dies, Carly learns that Nelle was Nina's bio daughter. Valentin orchestrates a takeover of ELQ. Jackie Templeton is revealed to be Chase's mom — and stepson Finn's ex-lover. Dante returns from an undercover mission but before he can reunite with Lulu, she is rendered comatose. Anna kills Alex in self-defense after learning that Alex is Peter's true bio mom. Drug lord Cyrus and attorney Martin are revealed to be Laura's half brothers. Julian is killed.

2021: Presumed dead, amnesiac Sonny lives as "Mike" in Nixon Falls; he and Nina (who stays mum about his true identity) fall in love. Jason and Britt become lovers but he breaks it off to wed Carly. Sonny gets his memory back and comes home. Sean Donely passes away. Spencer falls for Trina as he and gal pal Esme plot against Nik and Ava. Peter murders Franco. Finn and Anna split. Maxie passes her newborn off as Brook Lynn's baby to protect the baby from Peter. Shawn is freed from Pentonville. Victor Cassadine returns and reveals that he is Valentin's father. Scott and Obrecht hit the sheets. Curtis reunites with not-so-dead dad Marshall and splits from Jordan. Molly and TJ become domestic partners. Willow weds Chase, but beds Michael. Drew returns from the dead, but Jason is presumed dead. Dante and Sam couple up, as do Scott and Obrecht. Sasha and Brando's newborn, Liam, dies.

2022: Victor orchestrates Luke's death. Felicia kills Peter; Maxie reclaims her daughter. Anna and Valentin become lovers. Carly and Sonny divorce. Sonny and Nina declare their love, as do Chase and Brook Lynn. Ned adopts Leo. At bio dad Ryan's behest, Esme seduces Nik. Trina almost goes to jail when Esme frames her for releasing a Cameron/Joss sex tape. Newcomer Cody is Mac's secret son by Dominique. Victor forces a very much alive Holly to do his bidding and frames Anna for Lucy's faux murder. Liz learns from her parents, Jeff and Carolyn, that she was indirectly responsible for the death of Finn's wife, Reiko, who had been Jeff's mistress. Heather murders Brando.

2023: Britt dies at the hands of The Hook (a.k.a. Heather). Joss splits from Cameron to be with Dex. Nina and leukemia-stricken Willow learn they are mother and daughter, info Carly concealed. Drew and Carly become lovers. Michael and Willow welcome baby Amelia. Ava accidentally kills Nikolas. Amnesiac Esme learns Heather is her bio mom and gives birth to Ace. Mac shoots Ryan dead. After Curtis and Portia wed, she is busted for concealing that Curtis, not Taggert, could be Trina's father. Epiphany passes away.

Spencer (Nicholas Chavez), Esme (Avery Pohl, c.) and Trina (Sydney Mikayla), 2021

Chase (Josh Swickard) and Brook Lynn (Amanda Setton), 2022

NICK ARGO/ABC TROY HARVEY/ABC

LESLIE Charleson

Monica Quartermaine (1977-present)

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

When Leslie Charleson moved to L.A. from New York, "I had decided I'd had enough of soaps; I was moving on." But her old boss from LOVE IS A MANY SPLENDORED THING, Tom Donovan, who was then head honcho at GH, "persuaded me to come in and meet with him and persuaded me to join the cast." The next 45-plus years, she smiles, "went by in the blink of an eye".

What stands out to you about your early days at GH? "It was a pretty miserable beginning for me as Monica. Nobody really liked me because I guess they had let [the role's originator] Patsy Rahn go rather unceremoniously. And I started the day Elvis Presley died, which was devastating to me as a lifelong fan. Plus, not only did Tom [Donovan] talk me into doing the soap, but then he left! And there I was, not knowing who or what a Monica was, not having a clue as to what to do with her. All Tom said to me was, 'You make her what you want to make her.' So, that's what I was kind of faced with. Looking back now, it was kind of wonderful because I was given free reign because nobody was really saying, 'Well, Monica wouldn't do that.' I didn't know what Monica would do or wouldn't do, so I went ahead and did what I decided that she would do."

Who did you work with in the beginning? "Susan Brown [ex-Gail], Chris Robinson [ex-Rick] and Denise Alexander [ex-Lesley]. Denise, we're great friends now, by the way, but then, she was very scary! She was intimidating because she was kind of the queen bee."

The show was live on tape then, which meant long days at the studio. "They were the longest days in history, especially with Gloria [Monty, then-executive producer]. We would go sometimes until 2 or 3 a.m. and have to be back at 7. It was grueling. It was the kind of schedule where you never stopped bitching about it — you bitched if you didn't work and you bitched if you did work! We used to start rehearsals after lunch, then have a dress rehearsal and we wouldn't start taping the show until 3 o'clock in the afternoon. I remember Jane Elliot [Tracy] and I once went to the movies because we weren't [taping our scenes] until the end of the show!"

What do you remember about the start of your long working relationship with Stuart Damon (ex-Alan)? "I met Stuart when I auditioned the Alan wannabes. He was by far the best — and not very hard on the eyes at all! We really got along. Our dressing rooms were next to each other and we had a lot of good times, just talking. The whole [Quartermaine] tribe — David Lewis [ex-Edward] and Anna Lee [ex-Lila] and Jane — got along and loved each other and had more fun working together than ever. I mean, it was just a delight to look at the script and say, 'Oh, we're all going to be in the Quartermaine living room — this should only take seven hours to get through [*laughs*]!' Being able to work with good people, having good writing, it doesn't get better than that. I mean, that's why I stuck around. Because otherwise, what's the point?"

Did you notice more people recognizing you when GH became the hottest show on TV in the early 1980s? "Oh, Lord, yes — it was Luke and Laura, and Alan and Monica, and I think because we came into people's living rooms, people felt like they knew us. I remember we would go and visit colleges and the kids would be there in [hospital] scrubs. That was fun. At that time, there was no DVR; you had to watch it at the time it aired or you missed it altogether, and I had kids say to me, 'I changed my major because I didn't want to miss the show!' And people who said we taught them English because we repeated things over and over again."

In 1994, Monica was diagnosed with breast cancer, one of the finest medical stories GH has ever told. "Wendy [Riche, then-EP] and Claire [Labine, then-head writer] were women in charge of the show and in charge of the breast cancer storyline. Interestingly enough, we had all either gone through it or knew someone close to us who had, so we all had a vested interest in keeping it honest and real. This was one of the first times the show got into [a medical story in such depth] — we stopped freezing the town or Lassa Fever and all of that. It was important and difficult and rewarding because we all did our homework, and I really wanted to portray it in the most honest, realistic way we could."

When you think about the career you've had on the show, its longevity and its impact, what does it mean to you? "Well, I haven't really contemplated it because it just sort of went by. Again, I just have to say, 'Why leave a good thing?' There were rough spots, there were *really* rough spots, but when aren't there? There have been a lot of producers in the time I've been there, some good, some not so good, but we've managed to stay afloat, which means that somebody cares and somebody's looking after us, and as long as that is being done, we're in good shape."

This occasion — GH's 60th birthday — is a testament to the bonds the audience formed years ago with characters like yours, with the foundation you helped to set. "What a nice thing to say. That's very special. I never thought about it that way. I just thought, 'It's nice to have a job.' I'm truly humbled and truly grateful."

Sweet Child O' Mine: "Monica wanted that to be Rick's baby," recalls Charleson, pictured at A.J.'s 1980 christening with (from l.) Rick (Chris Robinson), Gail (Susan Brown) and Alan (Stuart Damon). "I think it was Lila who said, 'But it's the Quartermaine mole!' That good old mole that crushed everything [*laughs*]."

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

CHRISTOPHER WILLARD/ABC

JANE Elliot

(Tracy Quartermaine, 1978-80, 1989-93, 1996, 2003-17, 2019, 2020-21, 2022, 2023; on THE CITY, 1996-97)

■ ***Jane Elliot came in to GH to read for a role she was "clearly wrong for" (a possible recast for Gina Dante), but so impressed then-Executive Producer Gloria Monty that the role of sharp-tongued Tracy was created just for her. "I was the last piece of the puzzle," she says of her entrance into the Quartermaine clan.***

How would you describe how Tracy came to be Tracy? "It was a combination of Gloria, [then-Head Writer] Doug Marland and me. Everybody had a piece of that; everybody had input. Gloria wanted it to be Regina from *The Little Foxes*; that was her vision. My mother was English. She was educated and refined and a little bit arch. My mother smoked a cigarette with a cigarette holder, her gloves, her shoes and her handbag always matched, she drank martinis. For me, the characterization was a lot of my mother."

Why do you think the Quartermaines clicked with the audience as well as they did and still do? "I think that was Doug Marland and Gloria Monty. Gloria had a wonderful eye for talent and Doug was a consummate storyteller, and that was a good marriage between the two of them. And they cast these wonderful actors, Stuart Damon [ex-Alan] and Leslie Charleson [Monica] and David Lewis [ex-Edward], and we were so bonded and so connected right off the bat. The hours were brutal when we started. Sometimes we would leave the studio at two o'clock in the morning and have to be back at work at seven. I mean, sometimes we slept in our dressing rooms. We spent all day together and that kind of intimacy breeds a chemistry that reads on camera. That it has continued is a measure of that foundation."

Tracy is not a warm and fuzzy character. Did you ever have to fight against the instinct to want to be liked? "Absolutely not. And I think one of the reasons the character was as successful as it was is that I never held back. I did not need to tell the audience that this isn't really who I am. I was never afraid of people confusing what they see on TV with who I am because I know who I am! So, I was more committed to Tracy's villainy than some people might have been. I was perfectly comfortable and it's fun and it's easy to do. I look at actors like Genie Francis [Laura] and you know, that's the hardest work imaginable. Spending your day sobbing is *so* difficult. She's so good at it and I never was good at it, I never wanted to do it and thank God I didn't have to! I made my name being a bitch, not a brokenhearted heroine! I leave that to the people who are good at it. I'm good at this; I'm happy to wear the black hat."

Does it surprise you, given her personality, that Tracy is so beloved and so popular? "I think that she's changed over the years. She was much more one-dimensional when she started, and as different writers and different producers have had her in their hands, she has gotten fleshed out more and I think the audience has come to see more sides of her and maybe see sides of themselves. I think she's more relatable now."

What comes to mind for you when you think of the years you spent with the late David Lewis, Anna Lee and Stuart Damon? "[*Gets choked up*] It makes me want to cry. It was just a gift. It was a gift in my life — this whole show, part, family, the actors that I have been blessed with in the 45 years that I've been on this show and, in particular, those three that are passed and Leslie Charleson. Leslie Charleson and I met in the '60s when I was in a play on Broadway and she was dating a guy in the cast and she would come and hang out in my dressing room. Leslie gave me my wedding shower when I was getting married and Stuart made sweatshirts for me and my ex-husband [Luis Rojas, who was a GH cameraman], one for him that said, 'Jane Loves Luis' and one for me that said, 'Luis loves Jane'. I still have that sweatshirt. It is such a unique experience and I'm just blessed that this is my life."

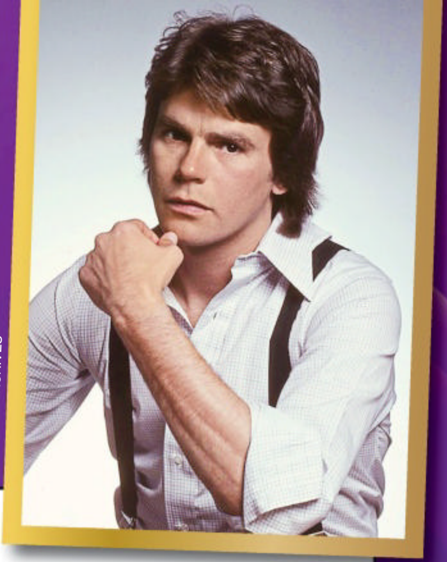
What does it mean to you that 45 years after you originated this role, you and your character are still so important to fans of the show? "When somebody says that to me, I say, 'Oh, that's just because I'm elusive. That's just because they never get to have enough of me. If they had me all the time, they wouldn't want me.' And I dismiss it because that's just my character defect; I diminish the power of it. But *if* you make me pay attention to it and respond to it like a grown-up, which is not anything that I want to do, I would say that I am unbelievably grateful. I think what audiences respond to in me is my joy in doing it. I just love what I do. That I get to have the life that I've lived, that I get to have the friends that I've made, that I get to have a pension I can live on, that I get to call myself an actor and to know, at my age, that I have a blessed executive producer and I can pick up the phone and say, 'Frank [Valentini, EP], I need my health insurance. Can you give me a few shows so I can get my health insurance?' And he says, 'Sure, when do you want to come?' I mean, name me five other actors in the business who can do that! So, when I show up to work, I show up with joy, gratitude and complete appreciation."

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

The Gift That Keeps On Giving: Long-term characters like the Quartermaines "are woven into the history of people's lives," notes Elliot, pictured in 1979 with (from l.) David Lewis (ex-Edward), Anna Lee (ex-Lila), Leslie Charleson (Monica) and Stuart Damon (ex-Alan). "That is the unique gift of soap operas, of long-form storytelling."

F★MOUS FIRSTS

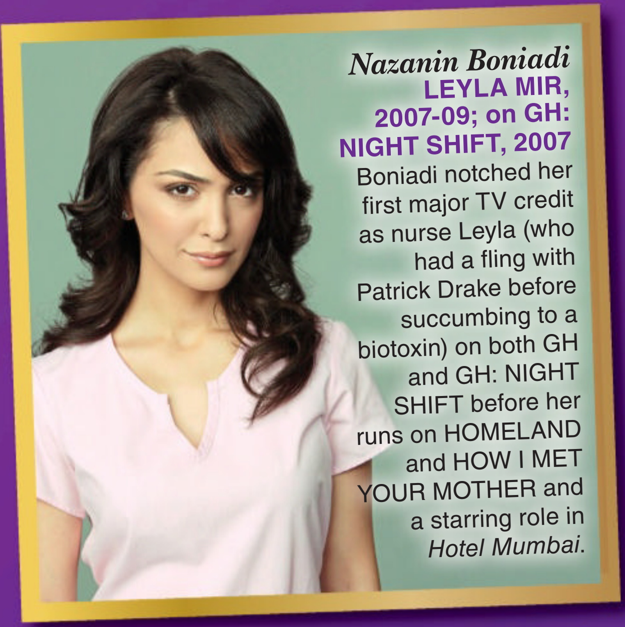
These household names got their big breaks on GH.


ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Richard Dean Anderson

JEFF WEBBER, 1976-81

The first doctor to marry Monica, Jeff discovered that his Port Charles ties ran deep (Steve Hardy is his bio dad) and was involved with Heather Webber (producing son Steven Lars) and Anne; after leaving town, he married Carolyn and sired Elizabeth, Sarah and Hayden. Anderson, meanwhile, hit it big on MACGYVER and STARGATE SG-1.


CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Nazanin Boniadi

LEYLA MIR, 2007-09; on GH: NIGHT SHIFT, 2007

Boniadi notched her first major TV credit as nurse Leyla (who had a fling with Patrick Drake before succumbing to a biotoxin) on both GH and GH: NIGHT SHIFT before her runs on HOMELAND and HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER and a starring role in *Hotel Mumbai.*

ERIK HEIN/ABC

Tia Carrere

JADE SOONG, 1985-87

Before audiences knew her from *Wayne's World* or *True Lies,* Carrere made her GH mark as Jade, Felicia's pal and a nurse who was part of the Wu mob family that ran the Asian Quarter (and, viewers later learned, Brad Cooper's aunt).

Mark Hamill

KENT MURRAY, 1972-73

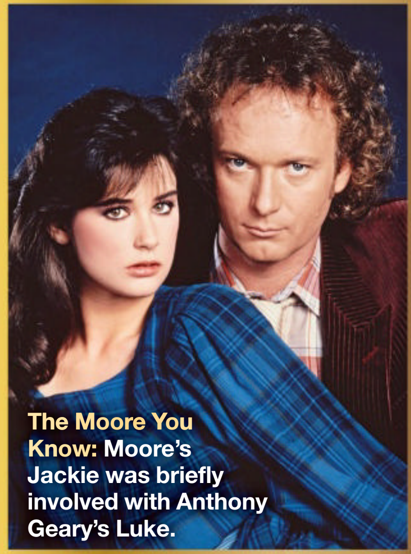
His GH stint as Jessie's nephew, who moved in with his sister, Caroline (Anne Wyndham, above), after the death of their father, was a blip — but he's etched into pop culture history forever thanks to his signature role as Luke Skywalker in the *Star Wars* franchise.

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Ricky Martin

MIGUEL MOREZ, 1994-95

While Martin was already a known quantity as a singer, as both a member of the Puerto Rican boy band Menudo and as a solo recording artist, he didn't blow up as a musical superstar — or become a respected actor in his own right, one who broke box office records on Broadway in *Evita* and earned an Emmy nom for THE ASSASSINATION OF GIANNI VERSACE: AMERICAN CRIME STORY — until after his turn as Miguel, Lily Rivera's ex (and the father of her son, Juan) who romanced Brenda.



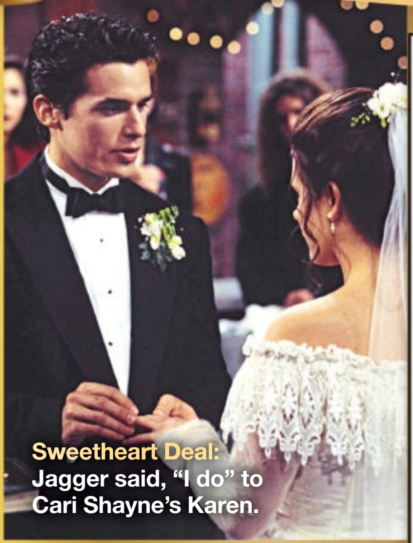
The Moore You Know: Moore's Jackie was briefly involved with Anthony Geary's Luke.

ERIC HEIN/ABC

Demi Moore

JACKIE TEMPLETON, 1982-84

Investigative reporter Jackie caught the eye of both Luke and Robert — and after exiting GH, Moore caught the eye of bigwig casting directors, notching leading roles on the big screen in a multitude of films (*St. Elmo's Fire, Ghost, Indecent Proposal* and *G.I. Jane*, to name a few).



Sweetheart Deal: Jagger said, "I do" to Cari Shayne's Karen.

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Antonio Sabato, Jr.

JAGGER CATES, 1992-94, 1995

Hunky Jagger, Stone's big brother, made a big splash at Port Charles High and ultimately wed Karen; Sabato, Jr., meanwhile, became a Calvin Klein underwear model and recurred on MELROSE PLACE.

Keep It Moving: Simmons helped Denise Alexander's Lesley work up a sweat.

Richard Simmons

HIMSELF, 1979-83, 2013

With only a few TV appearances under his belt, Simmons was not yet a household name known for his exuberant personality and fitness know-how when he joined the GH ranks as himself, leading aerobics classes for the hospital staff at the start of its ratings heyday. He returned for the show's 50th anniversary to wreak energetic havoc.

ABC

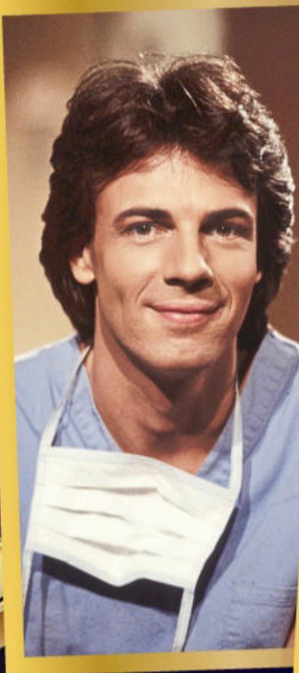
Music Men: Blackie dreamed big with Jack Wagner's Frisco (l.).

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

John Stamos

BLACKIE PARRISH, 1982-84

A tough-talking youth with a heart of gold who found a home with Rick and Lesley Webber, Blackie rocked out alongside Frisco in Blackie and the Riff Raff before going to jail for manslaughter. Fate was much kinder to Stamos, particularly beloved for his role as Uncle Jesse on FULL HOUSE.



ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Rick Springfield

NOAH DRAKE, 1981-83, 2005-07, 2008, 2012, 2013; ELI LOVE, 2007-08

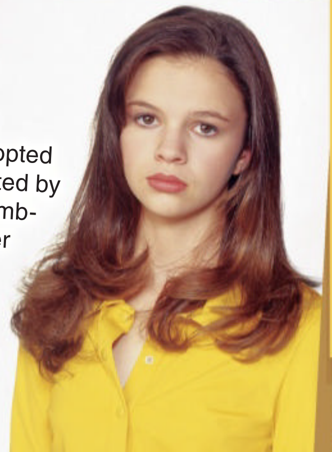
The Grammy-winning rocker was introduced to audiences as the ladies' man doctor who got steamy with Bobbie and Tiffany; the same year he made his debut, he topped the charts with "Jessie's Girl".

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Amber Tamblyn

EMILY BOWEN-QUARTERMAINE, 1995-2001

The role of Alan and Monica's beloved adopted daughter was originated by a then-11-year-old Tamblyn, who continued her career climb with projects like HOUSE, JOAN OF ARCADIA and *Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*.



Janine Turner

LAURA TEMPLETON, 1982-83

Jackie's sister, a look-alike for the then-missing Laura Spencer, found her niche in nighttime, starring on the cult hits NORTHERN EXPOSURE and FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS.

COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION

PHOTOS: CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

FINOLA Hughes

(Anna Devane, 1985-92, 1995, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012-present; on ALL MY CHILDREN, 2001-03; on GH: NIGHT SHIFT, 2008/ex-Alex Devane, 2017, 2019, 2020)

Though she had never seen GH before, Finola Hughes dove right into Anna's spy games and became one of Port Charles's most recognizable stars.

What do you remember about the role of Anna coming your way? "Well, when I look back on that, I remember being super-excited. I remember feeling, 'This is the character that I can do anything I want with. I can make this character be a strong woman,' with the full support of Gloria Monty [then-executive producer], who wanted this dual edge of a character, where she was feminine, but she was also kind of badass and crossing over into being on the wrong side of the law in the spy business."

What stands out to you about your early days? "I just remember as it was all developing, I just thought, 'Yeah, this character makes sense to me.' I'd never actually seen the show because I came from England. I used to watch two soap operas there, CROSSROADS and CORONATION STREET, and I just loved tuning in with these characters. I loved being in those characters' lives in the same way that we are in the fans' lives, which is so rewarding."

What did you think when they told you that you would have a scar on your face? "Yeah, that was a different feeling. It was really sweaty, the thing that they put on my face, and I remember thinking that I didn't completely understand why they were doing it. It was explained to me that this happened because Anna was an explosives specialist and my character had set something on fire or whatever and when it exploded, she got hurt. Gloria took me into her office and she showed me a clip from a Joan Crawford movie, *A Woman's Face*, and she said, 'This is what we're going to do with you,' and for the first few minutes, I didn't grasp what she was talking about. And then I just remember thinking, 'What does that feel like to a person?' In the end, we just put my hair over my face and I only had to wear the scar sometimes. But it was dramatic and I tried to be as thoughtful and sensitive toward it as I could. And then she'd apparently gotten it fixed, and I think that was when they sort of had painted themselves into a corner."

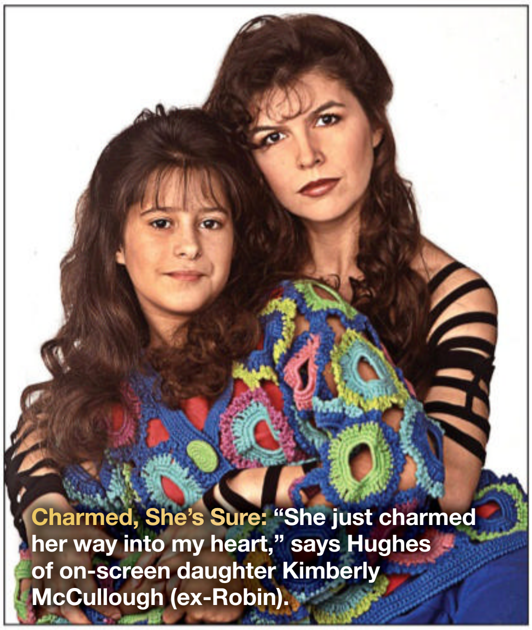
You said you didn't watch GH, but did you know how huge it was back then? "Yes, but I didn't really know what huge meant. I remember being in the supermarket and I was buying something and somebody was standing right behind me, looking at me. I remember turning and saying, 'Yes?' And they said, 'You're on that show,' and I was completely floored and just saying, 'Oh wow, that's insane, to be recognized in the supermarket.' But I never thought about it too much, honestly."

Did you have a sense that Anna was catching on at any point? "I guess when mail started to arrive, and there was a lot of hate mail to begin with because they were mad at the character. It would arrive in these giant bin bags and I was supposed to answer them. I remember them arriving at this house where I was staying at the time and my brother was living with me and he would start to read them and he would get really offended and sad from some of them. I would look at him and I would think, 'This is me, this is about my character.' That was amazing."

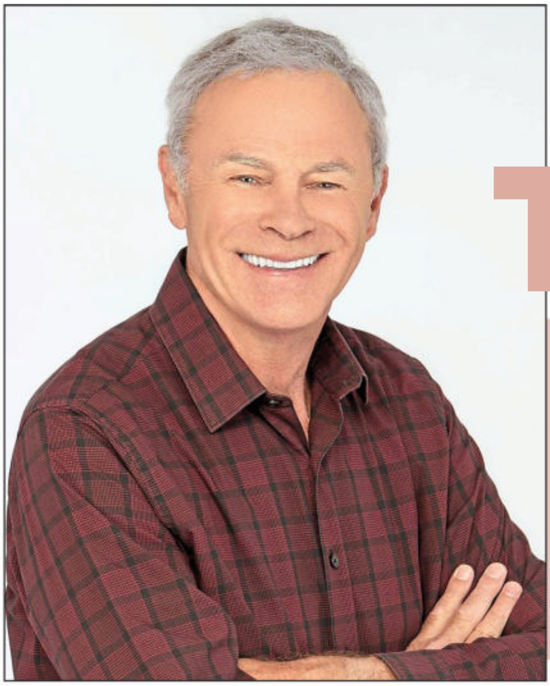
What do you remember about the early years with Kimberly McCullough (ex-Robin)? "Oh, my God. I fell in love with her, like, literally instantly. She just took me under her wing and I'm sure she'd say the opposite was true, but she just charmed her way into my heart. From that very first audition, I looked over her head at Tristan [Rogers, Robert] and we both got it at the same moment, like, 'Oh yeah, this is her.' And Gloria felt the same way."

Do you have a period of time in Anna's life that you consider your favorite to play? "There's a few. I really loved the Asian [Quarter] storyline. There was a mission, there was a purpose there, and we were surrounded by ridiculously amazing actors and it was such a fabulously exciting moment to have all these great new people come in. The alien story was pretty great, as strange as it was. Anything I got to do with Kimberly, especially the one time I went back when Robin was going through the HIV/AIDS storyline; it made me really regret not being there with her throughout that whole story. Getting to bring Anna back [in 2012] was really fabulous, with Frank Valentini as the new executive producer and realizing that he was as hands-on as Gloria and just feeling in such safe hands. Anything with Anders Hove [ex-Faison]; he's just an incredible actor and I just learned so much from him. Best villain ever. Michael Easton [Finn] is an amazing person to work with and now I've got J.P.S. [James Patrick Stuart, Valentin] — he's one of those actors that fill all the corners. He brings so much to the table that literally you show up with your own work and it's all filled in. It's really nice to have that support in a cohort, so I'm loving life right now."

What does it mean to you to be marking the 60th anniversary of GH? "I'm grateful for the fact that I'm a working actress at this juncture in my life. I'm grateful to have been part of an ensemble for so long. I think that suits my nature very well. I think I am a team player and I always have been. I really enjoy that part of this process. And then I can still have this connection with people that have watched the character for a long time. It's a very interesting relationship and, I think, it's specific to daytime. We daytime actors are very fortunate to go through life with that."



Charmed, She's Sure: "She just charmed her way into my heart," says Hughes of on-screen daughter Kimberly McCullough (ex-Robin).



TODD WAWRYCHUK/ABC

TRISTAN Rogers

(Robert Scorpio, 1980-92, 1995, 2006, 2008, 2012, 2013-14, 2015-16, 2018, 2019-present; GH: NIGHT SHIFT, 2008)

Unaware of the popularity of GH's signature duo, Tristan Rogers entered Port Charles, was dropped into Luke and Laura's hot plot and the rest is history.

GH is 60 and you were a part of the heyday when it was the top show on TV and Luke and Laura made the cover of *Newsweek*. What was that like? "Well, nobody goes into any kind of deal thinking it's going to be around for 60 years and that you're still going to be a part of it. Consequently, when I joined GH, I had no idea what was going on. I had no idea of the significance of Luke and Laura and their part of what daytime was. Back then, daytime was really coming out. Obviously, it had been around for quite a while but nobody had really taken notice of it. And then, all of a sudden, it was the show. I didn't realize what it was like to be a part of the show at that time."

When did you realize the juggernaut that was GH back in the day? "As I got more involved with the show and started doing personal appearances, it dawned on me that this wasn't just a job, that this was a lot more than just a job. It was a wake-up call to realize that. Every day there was something different; it was like a tidal wave of new things happening all the time. It was like we were the center of the universe, and nobody was even close to us."

What was it like working with then-Executive Producer Gloria Monty, who has often been described as a force of nature? "She absolutely was. There was no question about who was the boss. I didn't realize at the time there were a select little few who were her special people, and I became one of those people. What that meant was, she paid a lot more attention to what you were doing. She'd watch your scenes and then leave and get ready for tomorrow's show. At the time, I had no idea what the significance of that was and over time, I came to understand what a privilege that was, that she paid attention."

How was it working with Anthony Geary (ex-Luke)? "It was crazy [*laughs*]. I learned a lot from watching what he was doing. Probably, I learned too well. We were an absolute foil for one another, there was no question about that. He wasn't the easiest person to work with because he was always, like, two steps ahead of you, so you had to run to keep up with him. I learned that early on and went with it and used it. The most important thing about working with Tony was to listen to what he was saying, because he wasn't always on the script. He was on the storyline, but not always the way it was written, and I learned that from him. I thought, 'Well, if he can do it, I can do it.' Gloria noticed that. I sometimes think I was hired because I could keep up with him but there is no question that she noticed it, and she encouraged it. She would fine-tune it when we went too far off the script and off the planet, so she would come downstairs and say, 'Keep this. This is good. Get rid of that,' because quite often, we were always all over the place. It was a good time."

What was your most memorable storyline? "Well, that's pretty easy. The Ice Princess storyline was front and center and I was a significant part of that. It didn't really dawn on me until after it was over, after we'd gotten through it, that I realized, 'Wow, you were a part of something that was really important.' At the time, there were some friends of mine who were watching the show and they said to me, 'Tristan, you may not realize it but you're a big deal,' and I said, 'Huh? What do you mean?' And they were right. That story was a big deal. What I was doing was a big deal. And the amount of attention I was accorded from the public was a big deal. To me, it was just like a job, and I did not realize until after the [Luke and Laura] wedding just how big a deal it was."

You came and went a number of times over the years, but now you're back as a mainstay. "In many respects, it felt like I had never been away. All of a sudden, Frank [Valentini, executive producer] comes up to me and says, 'You're going to be the DA,' and I said, 'What?' He said, 'You're going to be the DA,' and I said, 'Okay, can you tell me how this comes about? Where did I get a license to practice law? When did I became a lawyer?' And he said, 'It happened,' and I said, 'Okay,' and I didn't go any further. To be perfectly honest with you, with coming back, it could be DA. It could be police commissioner. It could be dog catcher. It has not made a huge difference in my life. The only thing different is, as DA, he doesn't carry a gun."

How is it working again with all your former scene partners, like Genie Francis (Laura), Finola Hughes (Anna), John J. York (Mac) and Kristina Wagner (Felicia)? "It's like old times. I know that sounds corny but it is true. We don't always get that many scenes together, but I like to say we've turned the corner and you are going to get to see a handful of us playing a much more significant role on the show. I love working with all of them."

How does it feel to still be an integral part of the show after all these years? "I kind of take it for granted, and I shouldn't do that. I love the relationship he's got with Anna. He will always look out for her and she looks out for him. That also applies to Robert and Laura. They are both the gold standard. Robert and Laura went out and saved the world!"

Partners In Time: "We were an absolute foil for one another, there was no question about that," says Rogers of his dynamic with Anthony Geary's Luke.

ERIC HEIN/ABC

RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC

LAURA *Wright*

(Carly Corinthos, 2005-present)

■ ***Her third soap job was the ultimate charm for Laura Wright, who is 18 years and running in what has become her signature role.***

How did the role of Carly come your way? "In 2005, my contract was up on GUIDING LIGHT [where she played Cassie], and a year-and-a-half prior, Brian Frons [former ABC daytime chief] had called my agents and said, 'What's her deal with the show?' And then when my contract was up, I knew that the show was kind of on shaky ground, so I had my agent return Brian's phone call and ask him if I should re-sign on GUIDING LIGHT. And his response was, 'Tell her no,' and they wanted me to send a reel immediately. I had no idea it was for Carly; I thought it was for ALL MY CHILDREN or ONE LIFE TO LIVE. I had no idea that it was for GH, and within two weeks, I was being flown out to California to meet with the head writers and Maurice [Benard, Sonny] and Brian. I started October 2005; I had 10 days to leave GUIDING LIGHT and move my family out here and start on GENERAL HOSPITAL."

What do you remember about those early days? "I remember thinking that I really wanted to honor the fans, and what they loved about all the Carlys, but also bring my own thing to it. And I remember that being exhausting, and then Jill Farren Phelps [then-executive producer] saying, 'You don't have to keep walking on stage with all the other Carlys behind you; it's yours now. You get to do what you want to do,' and that was it. That took about four months, and I'm sure she saw me stressing, which is why it was so nice."

Did finding Carly come naturally to you? "It really came naturally. I really wanted to bring the fierceness that Sarah [Brown, ex-Carly] brought and the softness and the emotions and vulnerability that Tamara [Braun, ex-Carly] brought. I wanted to bring humor. I wanted her to be tough, but I wanted her to be a little more like Scarlett O'Hara, which I found, really, when I would work with Steve [Burton, ex-Jason] and Maurice. I always wanted to bring into Carly the brattiness of how she fully justified in her mind every decision she ever made. She always was kind of right in the end, but how she went about it was awful, which makes for a great soap opera character."

What do you like about Carly? "Well, I love her fierceness for her family. I love that no matter what, at the end of the day, it's Carly, Jason and Sonny; that's the real family. And I love her whys; I love that's it all from her pain. She's so flawed, which was more in the past before having her kids, which always seems to ground you if you allow it. I love her whys, her pains, the reason she fights, the reason why she doesn't trust — she wears it out in front of her — and then to have these people, these misfits just like her in Sonny and Jason, you find each other and then you become your own family and I loved that. I loved telling that story."

Carly has had a lot of romantic interests over the years. Is there one that you think was the best suited for her? "Honestly, my favorite was Todd and Carly. I loved that pairing. I thought, 'Oh boy, does this make sense. It could be trouble down the road, but boy does that make sense.' I loved Jax and Carly. They were super-fun and adorable and romantic and it was a gift for Carly at the time. With Sonny, they take care of each other differently and when they're on and it's great, it's amazing, but when it's off, it's awful. And Jason, I think, is the true love of her life and not necessarily in the romantic sense, but in the sense that he always was going to be there for her, always going to take care of her, always understood why she was the way she was and didn't judge her. He might have judged what she did, but he understood it came from pain and fear and abandonment issues. And I'm having a great time with Drew Cain. I mean, who doesn't like a good Marine? I think it works perfectly for this time in Carly's life."

Though you were not the first Carly, you hold the distinction of being the actress to play her the longest. What does that mean to you? "It means so much. It means I have a whole bunch of memories here and I have a whole bunch of storylines and I've gotten to do so many amazing things as an actor on this stage with this crew. I mean, Eden [McCoy, Josslyn]? She started at 12 and she's now almost 21. Watching this little girl grow up and Chad [Duell, Michael] as well, and all the relationships I have formed, it's like a home and I feel so lucky. I'm honored that the fans continue to embrace me as the character because clearly, being the fourth Carly, we know they don't have a problem recasting her."

What do you think about the fact that you are on a show that's marking such a milestone in which you played a very significant part in its history? "It's an honor; it blows my mind. It was the first soap opera I ever watched, the first show that ever taught me what a Friday cliffhanger was. When I watched the Luke and Laura wedding and Scotty caught the bouquet? I remember screaming, 'Oh, my God,' and then it goes off and you're like, 'Whyyy? Why do we have to wait to find out what happened?' My name is Laura, so when the song 'Think Of Laura' came out, I was obsessed, I had all the soap magazines, so to be on GENERAL HOSPITAL now, playing Bobbie Spencer's daughter and Luke Spencer's niece, it just blows my mind to this day. I can't believe it."

We Are Family: "I love that no matter what, at the end of the day, it's Carly, Jason [Steve Burton, c.] and Sonny [Maurice Benard]; that's the real family," says the actress.

XJ JOHNSON/JPI

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

JACKLYN Zeman

(Bobbie, 1977-2010, 2013-present)

Nurse Bobbie went from naughty to nice over her 45+ years in Port Charles, and Jacklyn Zeman has been there every step of the way.

Tell us your GH casting story. "I was in New York playing Lana on ONE LIFE TO LIVE and I got a call from Jackie Smith, who was the head of daytime at the time. She said GH was casting for this part but they hadn't found anybody. Because of ONE LIFE TO LIVE, I never auditioned for Bobbie. But she said, 'You have to meet the head writer, Douglas Marland. He created this character.' He came to my apartment on the West Side. I thought I'd get 15 minutes with him, if I was lucky. He stayed for 2 ½-3 hours, and we talked and laughed and we just hit it off. He was such a joy. He was a legend. But he never said I got the part. Next thing I know, I got a call saying I'm going to California."

Gloria Monty came aboard as executive producer and the show began a rise from the bottom to the top of the ratings. What are your standout memories of those heady early days? "Kin [Shriner, Scotty] and Genie [Francis, Laura] and I were three young'uns that got brought in to have a storyline together. When I'd come from New York, they had given me three sets of first-class tickets to fly to California: one for the wardrobe fitting, one to shoot the first couple of shows, and a third because I had to move out of my apartment in New York. We didn't have a car since I was in California, so they gave me a limousine and a bungalow in the Beverly Hills Hotel for the first three to six months so I could find a place to live. It was like a dream!"

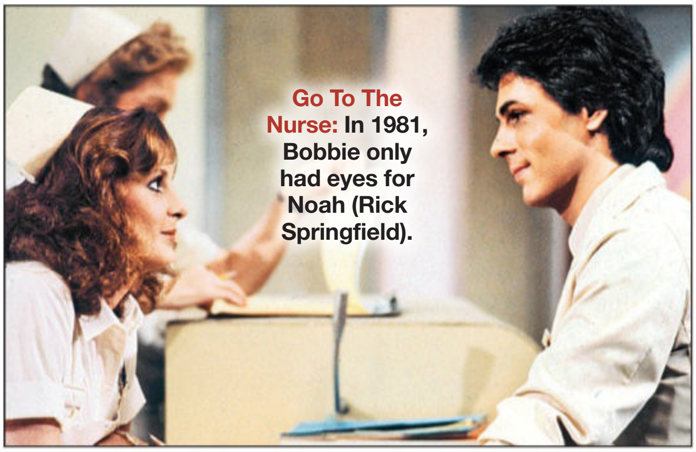
Describe your relationship with Anthony Geary (ex-Luke). "Tony, to me, is the real-life brother I never had. I had two sisters, and I will adore Tony for the rest of my life. We really grew up together. We worked with each other for all those years very closely. We traveled together. We'd go to events together. I met his mother when she came on the set. He came to my daughters' birthday parties. My family visited him in Amsterdam. I'll always feel attached to him."

Do you have a favorite moment from Bobbie's bad girl days? "Wow. Well, the whole storyline with Bobbie trying to break up Scotty and Laura, of course. Doug was brilliant setting that all up. But that didn't go over well with some of the fans. Because Bobbie was a bad girl in those days, there was no social media so the audience didn't really know you then like they know us now. I was getting some death threats in the mail, which is a federal offense, so I was given full-time FBI bodyguards. At the time, since the show was really popular, people would wait outside the gates and follow us home. Most people were good, but sometimes it could get a little scary. One time, I was on Kin's motorcycle and he was like, 'Let's lose the guard,' and I was like, 'That's not cool.' Looking back, it was incredibly rude but we were young, stupid kids and we weren't thinking. We got called into Gloria's office the next day and she laid down the law. She was livid with us, and rightly so."

What was it like having such a significant role in what is considered one of GH's greatest stories, B.J.'s death? "That was one of the greatest storylines I've been given as a gift to play, and one of the most emotionally difficult things I've ever had to do as an actress, and from what I've been told by the audience, it was one of the most remembered and treasured storylines. Everything was from the heart and it was difficult to watch but it was the circle of life. It was real. That scene where Bobbie and Felicia hugged, I think we all can relate to that. Brad [Maule, ex-Tony] was brilliant, and he was nominated for an Emmy that year for Best Actor. I thought for sure he'd get it because he was so real, so memorable and so emotional. He nailed it."

Bobbie had many different love interests over the years. Do you feel that there was one great love of her life? "Thank you, universe! It doesn't get any better than that, right [*laughs*]? Wow, that's tough.... I'd say Roy was the first real love of her life — and then he came back to her all those years later [in 1999] when A Martinez played the part — and we made the cover of *Soap Opera Digest*! Bobbie and Tony certainly had their ups and downs.... While he certainly wasn't her favorite TV husband, I remember when David Groh [ex-Brock] came in into Gloria's office. I knew David from RHODA and I joked with Valerie Harper that we shared the same husband. They got this sweet guy from one of the most popular sitcoms and make him an abuser and he was so good at it because he could be so charming. He became a very close friend over the years."

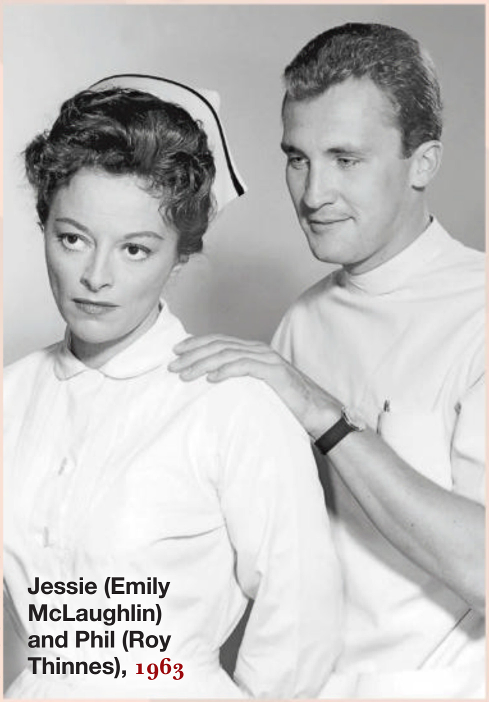
You have been part of it for 45 years. What does your unique role in its history mean to you? "This is one of the greatest blessings of my life, and I love being able to see the development. When we all came in for the cast photo, we were all dressed up and it was the first time we were all together since Covid. It was beautiful. Everyone was hugging. It's rare when we are all together. This 60th is also our chance to celebrate being all together. It's a beautiful thing. I feel very indebted to Frank [Valentini, executive producer] for bringing me back on. I am extremely happy. In the last few months, he's given me storyline and I'm loving the people I'm getting to work with. He didn't have to do that and he did it and I appreciate it. At 60, we have a future as well as a past, and a lot of that credit goes to Frank. It is a very happy time."


Go To The Nurse: In 1981, Bobbie only had eyes for Noah (Rick Springfield).

ABC

Dynamic DUOS

From the scandalous to the storybook, here's a look at some of GH's signature pairings.



ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Jessie (Emily McLaughlin) and Phil (Roy Thinnes), 1963

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Al (Tom Brown) and Lucille (Lucille Wall), 1970

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Diana (Brooke Bundy) and Peter (Craig Heubing), 1975

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

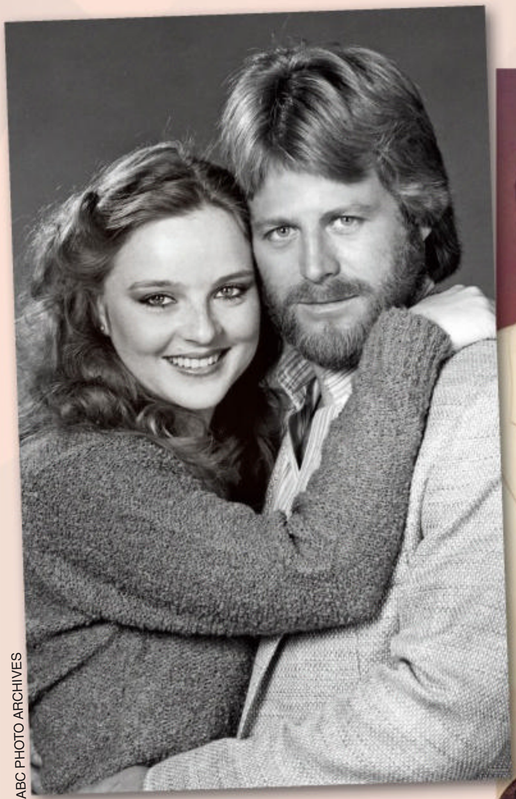
Rick (Chris Robinson) and Lesley (Denise Alexander), 1979

Bobbie (Jacklyn Zeman) and Noah (Rick Springfield), 1981

COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION

Audrey (Rachel Ames) and Steve (John Beradino), 1982

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES



ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Heather (Robin Mattson) and Scotty (Kin Shriner), 1982

BOB D'AMICO/ABC

Holly (Emma Samms) and Robert (Tristan Rogers), 1983

ERIK HEIN/ABC

Lee (Peter Hansen) and Gail (Susan Brown), 1983

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Monica (Leslie Charleson) and Alan (Stuart Damon), 1983

ABC

Edward (David Lewis) and Lila (Anna Lee), 1984

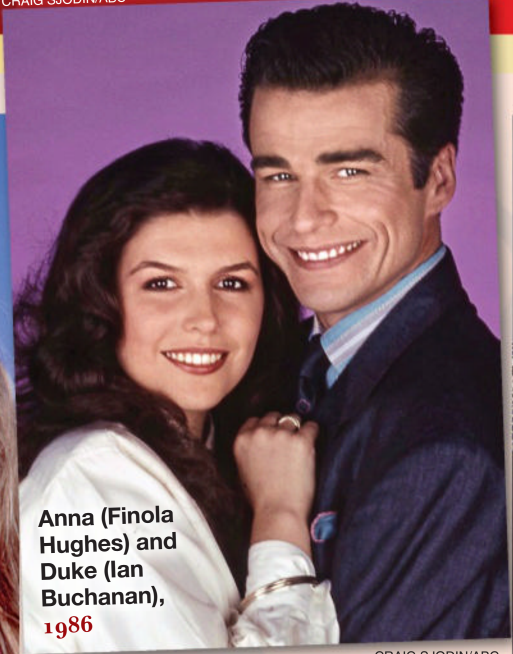
ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Jimmy Lee (Steve Bond) and Celia (Sherilyn Wolter), 1984

Frisco (Jack Wagner) and Felicia (Kristina Wagner), 1984

ABC

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

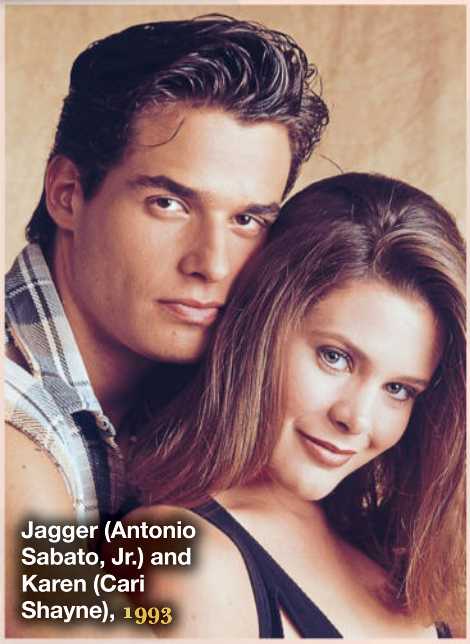


Anna (Finola Hughes) and Duke (Ian Buchanan), 1986

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Robert and Katherine (Edie Lehmann), 1990

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

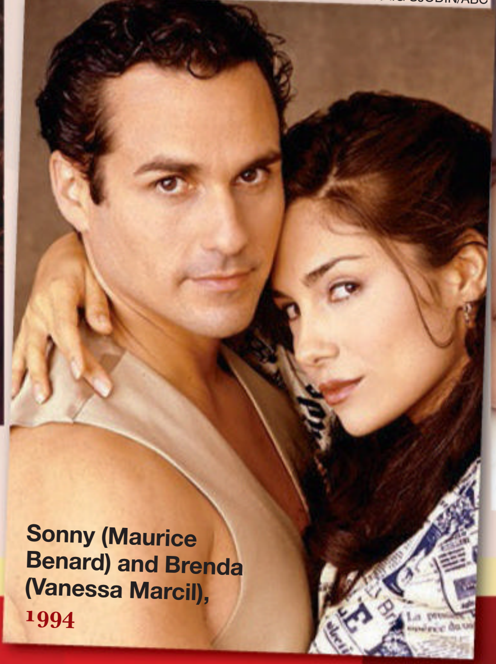


Jagger (Antonio Sabato, Jr.) and Karen (Cari Shayne), 1993

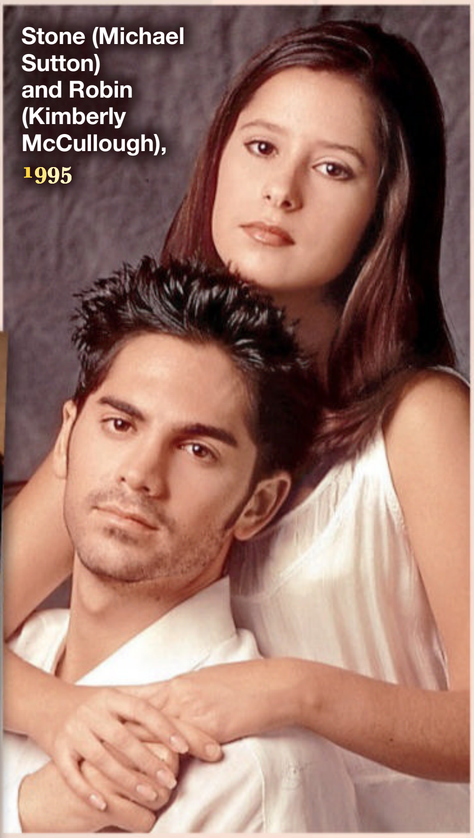
CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Tony (Brad Maule) and Bobbie, 1991

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

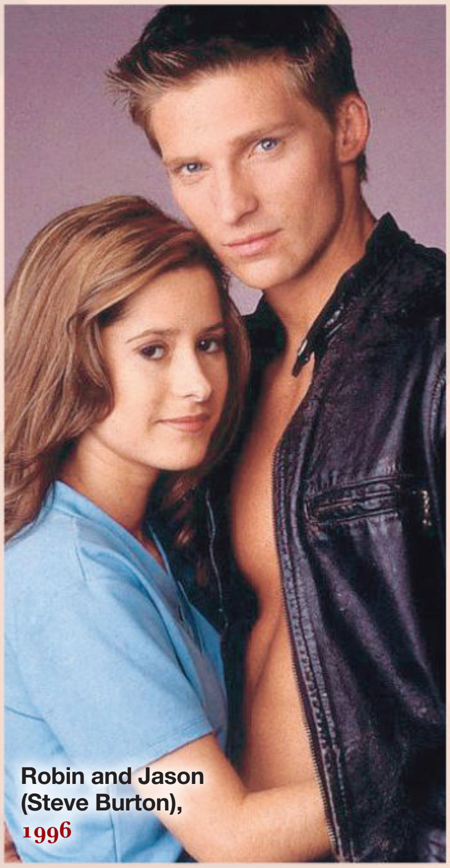


Sonny (Maurice Benard) and Brenda (Vanessa Marcil), 1994



Stone (Michael Sutton) and Robin (Kimberly McCullough), 1995

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC



Robin and Jason (Steve Burton), 1996

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

ANDREW ECCLES/ABC

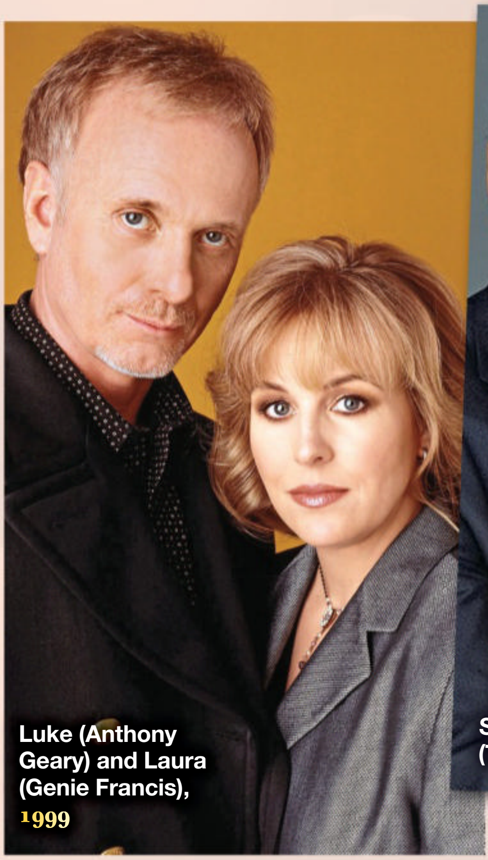
Brenda and Jax (Ingo Rademacher), 1998

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Mac (John J. York) and Felicia, 1998

Elizabeth (Rebecca Herbst) and Lucky (Jonathan Jackson), 1998

COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION

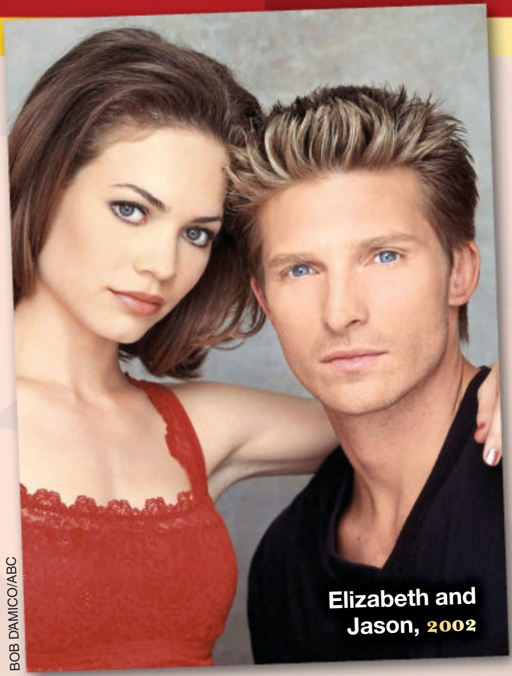


Luke (Anthony Geary) and Laura (Genie Francis), 1999

ANDREW ECCLES/ABC

Sonny and Carly (Tamara Braun), 2001

JEFF KATZ/ABC



BOB D'AMICO/ABC

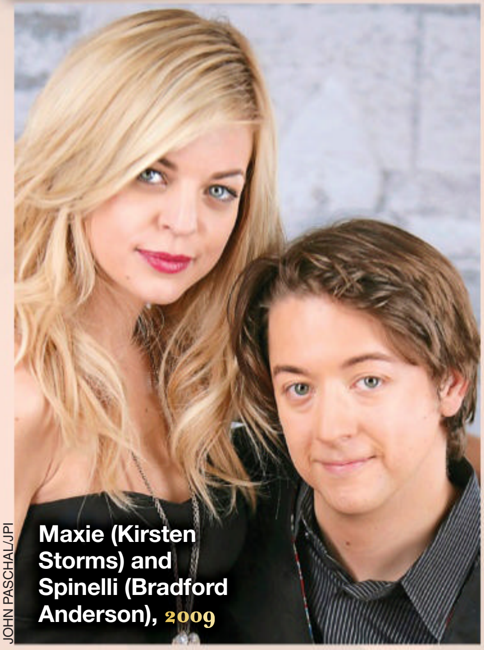
Elizabeth and Jason, 2002

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Emily (Natalia Livingston) and Nikolas (Tyler Christopher), 2003

YOLANDA PEREZ/ABC

Dillon (Scott Clifton) and Georgie (Lindze Letherman), 2004



JOHN PASCHAL/JPI

Maxie (Kirsten Storms) and Spinelli (Bradford Anderson), 2009

JOHN PASCHAL/JPI

Diane (Carolyn Hennesy) and Max (Derk Cheetwood), 2010

Molly (Haley Pullos) and TJ (Tequan Richmond), 2013

JOHN PASCHAL/JPI

Brad (Parry Shen, l.) and Lucas (Ryan Carnes), 2015

JIM WARREN

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Julian (William deVry) and Alexis (Nancy Lee Grahn), 2016

Franco (Roger Howarth) and Elizabeth, 2017

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Jordan (Vinessa Antoine) and Curtis (Donnell Turner), 2018

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Sam (Kelly Monaco) and Jason, 2019

TODD WAWRYCHUK/ABC

Valentin (James Patrick Stuart) and Anna, 2022

LESLEY BOHM

Spencer (Nicholas Chavez) and Trina (Tabyana Ali), 2023

RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC

ANTHONY Geary

(Luke Spencer, 1978-1983, 1984, 1993-2015, 2017; Bill Eckert, 1991-93)

JIM WARREN

Geary broke the daytime leading man mold when he came aboard GH as antihero Luke Spencer, a role that catapulted him to fame and earned him a record-setting eight Daytime Emmy Lead Actor trophies.

You originally auditioned for the role of Mitch Williams. What do you remember about that experience? "I remember I didn't think I was particularly right for it. He seemed awfully straight to me; very business-like and running for senator, so I decided that it would be fun to do because it would be challenging. And then in the audition for Gloria Monty [then-executive producer], Jane Elliot [Tracy] auditioned with me and I was just sitting in the chair writing in a notepad when she comes into the scene and I was making a grid for tic-tac-toe. She came in, looked at it, took my pen and started the game. And that was amazing to me, that we had that kind of playing/working together immediately."

How did you find out that Gloria wanted to create a role for you? "After I found out they didn't want me for Mitch Williams, Gloria's office called my agents. She was directing an ABC WIDE WORLD OF MYSTERY, television movies that came on at 11 o'clock at night, and I went over and read and she gave me a part in that. Within a month, she called back and said, 'Come in and talk to me. I have a part I want you to play.' So it was a nice experience."

When it came to embodying Luke at the outset, how did you see the character? What do you think you brought to him that may have captured Gloria's imagination the way it did? "Well I went full-out with antihero. Antiheroes are people that do the wrong things for the right reasons and the right things for the wrong reasons, and antiheroes are classically romantic in that they usually have a bad side. Antiheroes in history go way back beyond Shakespeare, but it's always been an important piece and most shows have one, especially daytime shows. But there weren't a lot of antiheroes who were really dangerous and if they were, they weren't the leads as much as they were supporting characters, so I think Gloria had this picture of a good/bad guy or a bad/good guy and gave me a great opportunity to explore that."

Who did you click with first in the cast? "Kin Shriner [Scott], Jackie Zeman [Bobbie], Jane Elliot."

What is your favorite memory of working with Kin in the early years and what do you recall about the fight on the boat between Scotty and Luke? "It was written that there would be a fight on the deck. Somebody said, 'We'll get a stunt man in,' and I said, 'No, we won't; I'm going to do this.' And Gloria said, 'If you can do it, Tony, let's do it.' And it was a great punch; Kin did a great punch and I dropped off the deck of the boat into the water and it's my favorite fight sequence I've ever been involved with, the first one with me and Kin on the boat. It was just so unexpected and the end of it was so dramatic, that shot of me falling into the water."

What stands out to you about your early working relationship with Genie Francis (Laura)? "Genie is a lot younger than I am and I had been working on television and in the theater for several years and I came on to a show that was her first show. She was already on and was already successful with Kin. And I had a sort of protective feeling about her for the first few years. I felt sort of responsible, in a way; that we were responsible to the partnership, that we were going to build something there."

When you look back on the inception of Luke and Laura, what is your own take on why they so appealed to the audience? "Their love was bigger than life. Their love was classical, like Romeo and Juliet. It was all-consuming. It was live-or-die love. There's something very appealing about two people coming from different sides of the tracks and finding their way to each other and working out those social differences. That's what it was, too. She was the princess, he was the pauper."

How would you describe your artistic collaboration with Gloria Monty? "It was a dream come true. It was someone who really got me, really understood me, after I had been in show business for 10 or 15 years. And I was always pretty much a hard sell, a hard guy to cast, because of my personal qualities, I suppose. But she saw it and got it completely and was utterly supportive. The dream relationship for me of my career was my collaboration with Gloria Monty. I don't think Luke Spencer would have happened, and certainly wouldn't have been as successful, if someone else had been guiding the ship at that time."

What are your memories of having Elizabeth Taylor on the GH set playing Helena? "None of your business [*laughs*]!"

Were you in awe of her when she showed up on set? "Well, there is that famous moment when I was in that first scene with her and I just completely went blank because I got caught in the violet eyes looking up at me. I completely blanked out, and went, 'Oh, *God*, it's Elizabeth Taylor!' There's footage of that everywhere. And she said, 'Oh, how sweet are you? You should have seen me yesterday.' "

What can you share with us about the antics you and Tristan Rogers (Robert) would get up to shooting on location? Who was the biggest instigator/offender? "We were bad boys who did a lot of laughing. When we were told to settle down and do the scene, we would, but those were long locations. I'm drawn to the experience in San Antonio where Tristan and I got so bored waiting for them to change scenes, we walked away from the set. It was out in the desert and we found a place to sit down and have margaritas. It had a little outdoor café/terrace and we sat and we were having a drink and we kept seeing this truck go back and forth past us and Tristan said, 'Who is that?' And it was one of the stage managers searching for us. That was completely childish and irresponsible and quite a good time."

The Spencer family — Bobbie, Luke and Ruby in those days — have a dear place in fans' hearts. What stands out to you about the dynamic between those char-

Packing A Punch: Geary insisted on doing the famed Scotty (Kin Shriner)/Luke brawl without a stunt double.

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

acters, and your off-camera dynamic with Norma Connolly (ex-Ruby) and Jackie Zeman (Bobbie)? "It was love in both places. Norma was really important to me — a sweet, inspiring, courageous woman — and Jackie has always been one of my favorite people, so what made it work was that the three of us really loved each other as human beings and respected each other as actors. And it was easy, then, to play family, especially a family as broken as the Spencers were in those days. Jackie was introduced as a hooker who worked in Norma's brothel, so Aunt Ruby was a madam and Bobbie was a hooker and Luke grew up in that environment, where his sister was doing someone in one room and his aunt was making deals with people and that's where he learned his street smarts. I thought that was just the most exciting storyline I could possibly imagine at that point in my career. It was just wonderful to embrace it with two actors like Jackie and Norma. We all appreciated it and we all trusted each other. It was just really good work done and I'm so pleased to hear the audience remembers that threesome because it was a special time for me, working with Norma particularly, because she wasn't around that much longer."

Can you put into words how your life changed when the show took off to the point that you were on magazine covers, talk shows and surely lost a fair degree of anonymity in public? "Well, the negatives come up first for me. It's hard for me to pin down the positives. The degree of fame that I experienced was never that comfortable to me; I'm not really that guy. I always felt that I had to create something to be a 'celebrity' because I didn't think I was authentically myself anyway. It's really difficult for me to discuss fame because I don't see myself that way and I don't understand it."

What did your first of your historic eight Emmy wins mean to you? "That I wasn't crazy, that I had jumped onto a good ride with GH, and Gloria Monty and Genie Francis and Kin Shriner and Jackie Zeman and all these people were a good fit for me. It was the first time that I realized I might stay on this show for a while because I was always looking for any way to get out of it, to go away, but when those Emmys started coming in, I changed my mind."

What about the second Emmy? "The second one is more important in a way because if you get a second one, it means the first one wasn't a fluke. The first one is very exciting but it sets you in a different category, at least in my mind, and I believe you're expected to deliver a better performance. I mean, you're an Emmy-winning performer! You can't just go in and do a good job, you've got to find a way to make it count. And when I was nominated for a second one, I went, 'Yeah, okay, I know what I'm doing now,' or, 'I'm on the right track.' "

Is there a story that you never got to do that you wished you'd gotten to do? Or is there a story that you want another crack at for one reason or another? "Well there are endless stories that I wouldn't mind having another crack at, because they didn't work or I worked too hard. I did a lot of overacting when the material was weak and that's the wrong way to go. When the material is weak, you do less, and it took me a long time to realize that. I wouldn't mind doing a lot of stuff over, but there's also a lot of stuff I wouldn't want to have to do over."

What was it like to work with Jonathan Jackson at the start of his GH career as Lucky and throughout the years? "The first thing that stands out about Jonathan was that he was way older than his years. We worked on his first scenes in Rochester, NY, and he was 10 or 11 or something and I mean, I knew he was an actor immediately. The great thing about Jonathan is that he always asked all the right questions and some of them I remember to this day. One day, while we were on the run or we were living these sort of Witness Protection kind of lives, Jonathan said to me, 'How come I don't have a dog?' I thought, 'That's the best question ever.' So I went to whoever was writing and I said, 'Can we have a dog? Lucky needs a dog. He's got to find this dog and fall in love with it, he doesn't have a brother or a sister or anything, we're always on the run, it's a protective thing, he needs a dog.' And they got him one [Foster]. I don't think it lasted more than six months or something! Anyway, Jonathan has a sense of truth and honesty that is really, really sophisticated. His work is some of the best I've ever seen and ever expect to see. I learned a lot from Jonathan. I should have learned more."

Did you enjoy performing at the Nurses' Balls? "Oh, I loved it. Just loved it. I loved it every time we did it. We'd always complain, but I'm a song-and-dance man, so I was always happy with the Nurses' Ball. Any reason to dance and sing and act a fool! ["Midnight Train To Georgia"] was particularly nice because of the group — it was me and Jonathan and Joseph Phillips [ex-Justus] and then, of course, Rosalind Cash [ex-Mary Mae], who was wonderful. I enjoyed singing 'I Am What I Am' at the last Nurses' Ball I was in, where Luke ends up asking Tracy to marry him at the end of the number. I thought all that was stupid, but I loved doing the number!"

When you look back at your overall run on the show, is there a time/era/storyline you would single out as the most fun or creatively satisfying? "I liked a lot of it. I mean, in 30 years, I liked a lot of it! I was always kind of pushing to be a little edgier. I wanted a little less safe. I think about the scenes I did with Maurice [Benard, Sonny] and how different they were than the scenes I would do with Kin. Each actor has his own way of bringing life to the character and that was exciting because I didn't have to do much work when I'd watch these different people acting their parts, because when they're good, you know, nobody's better than Maurice when he's really tied into a moment and nobody's funnier than Kin. I swear, Kin is a second W.C. Fields in my mind. I smile every time I think of him and he makes me laugh every time I see him and it isn't that he's trying to be funny, that's the thing that's so funny! He just is. All the beautiful women I've had the pleasure of working with have been extraordinary, too, from Genie to Jane and all the ones in between, Jackie and Lynn Herring [Lucy]."

In what ways has being away from the show, and living outside of the country, changed your perspective on your GH career and journey? "Well, not being on the show after having been on it for 30-plus years, practically half my life, I have a feeling of satisfaction because I did it, I showed up, I did my work, I won some trophies, I enjoyed the people I worked with for the most part and I feel I got out in time. I look back on it and it's great and it gave me this wonderful life I have now, so I'm not going to complain. I live in the city [Amsterdam] I've always wanted to live in my whole life and I have somebody who loves me and I have a life now, that I didn't have before, no matter how many fan letters or Emmys or how many pages of dialogue to learn. I didn't have what I have now. So, everything happened at the right time, I guess."

As the show is poised to celebrate its 60th anniversary, what do the role and the legacy mean to you? "It means that I was just goddamn lucky."

The Family Way: Geary enjoyed his on- and off-screen dynamic with Jacklyn Zeman (Bobbie, c.) and Norma Connolly (ex-Ruby).

Edge Of Glory: Working with Maurice Benard (Sonny) was a highlight for Geary.

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES HOWARD WISE/JPI

RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC

KRISTINA *Wagner*

(Felicia Jones Scorpio, 1984-2003, 2004, 2005, 2007-08, 2012-20, 2021, 2022-present)

At the tender age of 22, Kristina Wagner put her college education on hold to move from Indiana to L.A. to take on the role of Aztec princess Felicia Cummings Jones Jones Scorpio Scorpio.

How did you come to join GH? "I was a theater major in Indiana and I sent in my resumé to a talent model consultant and she sent it to Mari Lyn Henry, who was the head of ABC casting at the time. Mari Lyn called me and I went to Chicago to audition for Marlene Laird, who was one of the directors at the time under Gloria Monty, who was the executive producer. So, I got the part in Chicago and then moved out to L.A. with a trial [contract] for 13 weeks, and then they renewed it, and my life was never the same. It changed drastically, from an Indiana girl to a girl that lives in Los Angeles and was on national television, at that time, every single day. It was very consuming; it became my world and it molded and shaped me into the person I've become today."

What do you remember about the very early days? "Well, the first person I met was Tristan [Rogers, Robert]; he was in the chair when I first went into the makeup room. Actually, no, it was Jack Wagner [ex-Frisco, to whom she was later married in real life], because we did a photo session the day before my first [day of taping]. He liked my long hair, and makeup artists who are still friends with me today remember him, like, fondling my long hair because we did that pose that you do for soap magazines where couples are right next to each other and the girl is down below. So, they have memories of that, you know, early attraction of real life. Stuart Damon [ex-Alan] was also a major influence. He was one of those people who took me under his wing and was very gentle and kind and calmed my nerves and made me feel like I belonged."

What is your favorite memory from shooting on location? "When we shot down in San Pedro for what they called, at that time, the 'Asian Quarter' storyline. I loved that storyline, it's one of my favorites. But anyway, we were on the loading docks down there and I was in a Jeep with Jeff, who was the head stunt coordinator and a good friend, and Jack, and we were racing through these big cargo shipping containers. We were going, like, 90 miles per hour around them and it was a thrill — it was fun and frivolous and risky. I mean, that's youth! But I just remember us laughing and laughing and having such a good time. It was a lot of good times back then."

Do you have a favorite Frisco/Felicia moment? "It was 1986, the Policeman's Ball. That was long before the Nurses' Balls and it was a grand affair. This was when we were at [former studio] Sunset Gower and the set took up the entire stage, which is not something they do anymore. Frisco and Felicia had already established their relationship but we were dancing to 'Careless Whisper' by Wham!, and I'm dancing with not just Frisco, but Jack Wagner, and Kristina fell in love with Jack Wagner. I don't know if he fell in love back [*laughs*]! But that was my experience of it, and it was just one of those beautiful moments. That's kind of when it all started and I'm *really* grateful for it because as a result, I had the great, wonderful privilege to have two amazing sons in my real life. It comes with a lot of weight now, more than ever, because I did lose my son [Harrison] last year."

Fans love that Felicia is still interacting with her longtime friends, like Anna and Lucy, and really enjoyed the lovely reunion she recently had with Holly. "I was really happy with that. The more she can be on the show, the better! I really like Emma [Samms, Holly] and it was really great to see her and work with her and talk about old times. Many years ago, we used to socialize away off-camera; we'd go ice-skating. Back then, we worked so much that there really wasn't time to nurture friendships outside of work; you just kind of hung out with the people you worked with!"

More so than most actors, there's been a lot of overlap for you between the personal and the professional with GH. Given that, what does it mean to you to be celebrating the show's 60th anniversary? "I feel lucky. I feel fortunate. I mean, this is extraordinary, this 60th anniversary. GENERAL HOSPITAL is iconic and this is an incredible honor, to be part of a 60th year, and my 32nd year. I am amazed that this has happened to me, personally. I'm at a point in my own personal life where I'm working through bereavement, because I lost Harrison, and my daily mantra — or prayer or whatever anybody wants to call that — is hope, and to stay willing, to be willing to continue. These are trying times for everybody. There are conflicts, there's racial discrimination, there's the gap between the haves and the have-nots and I'm not alone; there are a lot of parents going through bereavement. For me, it was about the people then on [GH], and it's about the people now on [GH]. Through my loss last year, so many actors and crew have been loving and kind. I'm feeling that so strongly personally, you know, on the set, and even away from the set, I get calls, I have actors checking in on me. It's really extraordinary. Harrison's death has affected me profoundly, of course, and I have to bring it up because it's who I am; it's a really important part of me and my journey, even on [GH]. He took great pride in my role as Felicia, and so a lot of this, for me, is for him."

Longtime Companion: Wagner remains close friends with co-star Finola Hughes (Anna), pictured here in 1985.

GEORGE LONG/ABC

DAVID ASTORGA/CROWN MEDIA UNITED STATES LLC

JACK *Wagner*

(ex-Frisco Jones, 1984-88, 1989-91, 1994-95, 2013)

■ ***Getting cast as a musician skyrocketed Jack Wagner to mainstream superstardom. "I owe GENERAL HOSPITAL my career because it launched me," he sums up.***

Within a year of joining the show, you were a chart-topping pop star. How did Frisco joining Blackie and the Riff Raff beget your own music career? "It was my last screen test and [then-Executive Producer] Gloria Monty asked if I happened to play the guitar or sing, and I said yes, and she asked if I could bring my guitar and sing something before the scenes for my audition. So, I brought my guitar and played a Kenny Loggins song and then went into the scenes and got the part. Thankfully, I had a musical background but I wasn't in L.A. to pursue a music career, and I had to go into the recording studio and record a couple of songs for Blackie and the Riff Raff. An ABC music executive asked if I was interested in a record deal. She was best friends with Quincy Jones. I had dinner with Quincy two nights later, and my first single was 'All I Need'. "

With GH supercouples, the baton was passed. After Luke and Laura, Frisco and Felicia were *the* duo in the mid-'80s. What stands out to you about that period? "I was not aware of how popular the show was until I joined it. I was just out of drama school and was going to go to New York to pursue Broadway, so never in my wildest dreams did I see myself on a soap opera. Of course, when I joined the show, Luke and Laura had happened. Rick Springfield [ex-Noah] and 'Jessie's Girl' happened. John Stamos [ex-Blackie] was in huge storyline. I kind of walked into something that I didn't know what it was. Then after, when Kristina [Wagner, Felicia] joined, it was an opportunity I think happens very rarely, when you have someone who is that adorable and yet so talented but yet so green and yet so beautiful. We were these two young people trying to discover not only who we were, but we fell in love in the process, like the characters. The story had danger and heartbreak and it was at that time, I think, the audience fell in love with these two characters. To Gloria Monty's credit at GENERAL HOSPITAL, they really wrote towards how to include comedy along with the romance and danger."

You did a lot of location shooting in those days, from San Antonio to Atlantic City. Any standout or favorite memories from being on location? "I'm glad you brought that up. We shot in Vancouver. We shot in Atlantic City and San Antonio but quite often, we were in makeup and disguises. In story, we were in France. We were in the circus, which they built on the GENERAL HOSPITAL lot. I call that the theater mask, and very seldom on television do actors get to wear masks with accents and hairdos and glasses. Kristina and I had this great opportunity. She also played a belly dancer in one storyline, so we were always exercising comedic bits. I think the audience loved that part of the theatrical nature of our storylines."

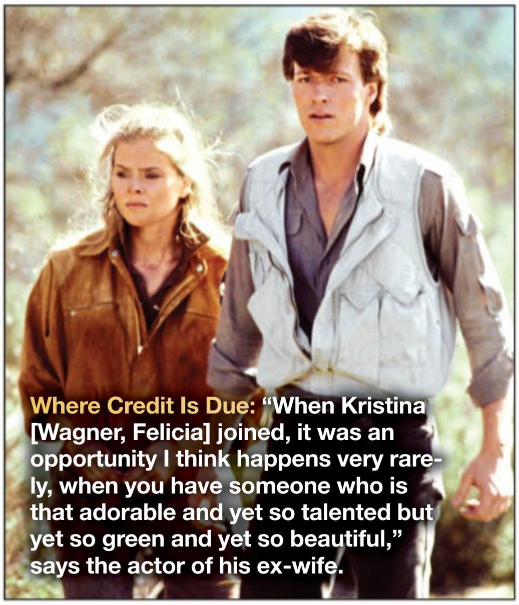
What do you remember about filming the Frisco/Felicia wedding? What stood out? "How real it felt, for both Kristina and myself. The audience related to us because what was happening was actually authentic. We were falling in love off camera and so I really felt that helped when you're stating your vows and when you're kissing and when you're arguing, so we had this truth to us and this honesty that the camera caught. You can't hide what's really going on with two people."

How would you compare your TV wedding to your real-life wedding? "The real-life wedding was more of like eloping and the TV wedding was a 'big deal' in quotes. There was no tiara and no uniform outfit for Kristina and Jack [*laughs*]."

What was one of your most memorable fan encounters? "Well, there have been a few, but I would say that more often than not, it would always happen in New York. People there have no filter, in the best possible way. That's one of the many reasons why I love New York. They would scream, 'Oh, my God, it's Jack Wagner!' It was actually nice when they said my name. Usually it was, 'Oh, my God. It's Frisco!', which was always great, too. But in L.A., no one cared [*laughs*]."

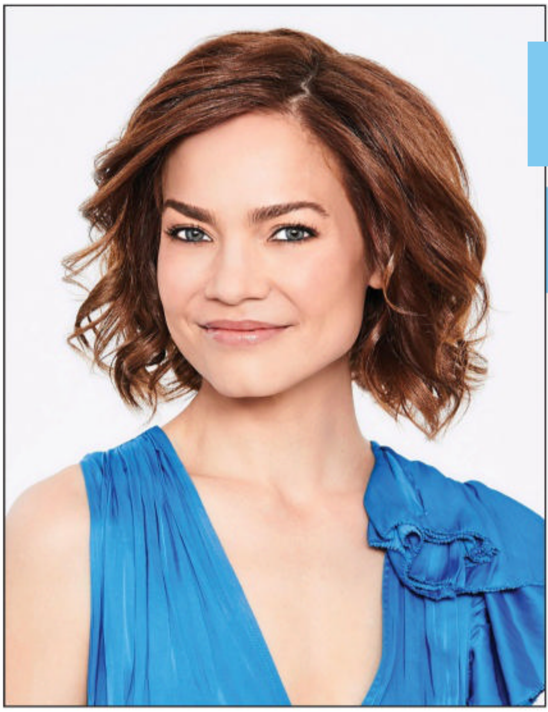
Looking back on it now, how did landing GH change your life? "It was my big break and it launched my career. Even to this day, with the shows I've been on since then, MELROSE PLACE [as Peter] and BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL [as Nick], I still get, 'Oh, my God, Frisco!' I get that more than any other character I've ever played."

What does it mean to you to have such an iconic place in the history of this legendary show as it marks 60 years on the air? "I look at it in complete gratitude that I got the part, and that I was ambitious enough once the music fell into my lap. The music just happened. I put together a band. We toured and played hundreds of concerts around the country. I was able to work in a period we'll never see again, where soap operas had huge ratings and you knew that the performance you were giving was going to be watched by many people and you'd touch so many people and entertain them. For me, I owe GENERAL HOSPITAL my career because it launched me. It was my big break and I'll always have a loyalty and a place in my heart with gratitude and appreciation to Gloria Monty and GENERAL HOSPITAL."



Where Credit Is Due: "When Kristina [Wagner, Felicia] joined, it was an opportunity I think happens very rarely, when you have someone who is that adorable and yet so talented but yet so green and yet so beautiful," says the actor of his ex-wife.

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES


RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC

REBECCA Herbst

(Elizabeth Webber, 1997-present)

Rebecca Herbst initially read for the role of Sarah Webber, and though she didn't get the gig, she so impressed higher-ups that they created the role of Elizabeth just for her. Nearly 26 years later, she says, "I wouldn't trade this job for anything."

Elizabeth was popular almost immediately. Why do you think the audience connected with her so easily? "I think it obviously goes back to her first day in Port Charles when she came in as this naughty little teenager with this very rebellious side, and we all knew she was like that because she had absentee parents. I think people automatically have a heart for children in that position and they could understand her brattiness. And then the life events that took place — the rape, losing people she loved, the tragedies she endured — affected people and I think made Elizabeth very real. The first five years I was there, the writers did a phenomenal job giving her a lot of layers and explaining where she comes from and who she is. I also think that being Steve Hardy's granddaughter set my character up for success because people had already welcomed the Hardys into their family, in a way, and into their lives. I feel like I was almost grandfathered in because of the name."

What do you remember about filming the emotional aftermath of Elizabeth's rape? "When I did the rape scenes, I remember the actual crawling out of the bushes and how that was handled. I felt such relief that the people on set were touched and said they were moved and that I did a good job. I remember feeling like, 'Okay, that was a good day. That's what I set out to do and I accomplished it.' "

Did the heaviness of that story wear on you at all away from work? "I've been acting since I was six years old, so I'd really mastered the art of playing a character and then coming home as Becky. But doing those scenes, day after day, was physically and mentally exhausting. It was my first time working on a show where I did feel a little weighed down. It was heavy, especially knowing that the story came from [former Writer] Michele Val Jean's personal experience. I really felt like I had to honor the story as well as her and that I had to protect her and her story."

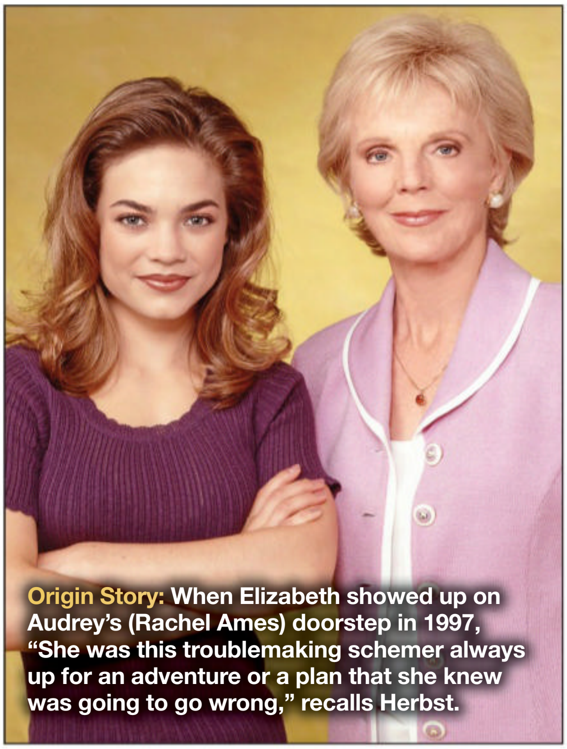
Liz's pairing with Lucky also took off right away. "That was also beautifully written, and I worked with really lovely people — Jonathan Jackson [ex-Lucky], Amber Tamblyn [ex-Emily], Genie [Francis, Laura] and Tony [Geary, ex-Luke]. I really jelled with them as people and I think that translated on screen."

Jason was another major love interest for Liz. What stands out to you about working with Steve Burton? "Steve and I worked beautifully together. I look back and think how fortunate I was to have ended up working with so many amazingly talented but also just really good human beings. When the Jason thing started, I remember being intimidated because this wasn't a teen storyline. I remember being extremely timid to work with Steve because I knew how popular he was on the show. I didn't understand the full gravity of what I was getting into, how popular the couple would be and how defining a moment in history that period of time would be for the character of Elizabeth. Which is probably a good thing!"

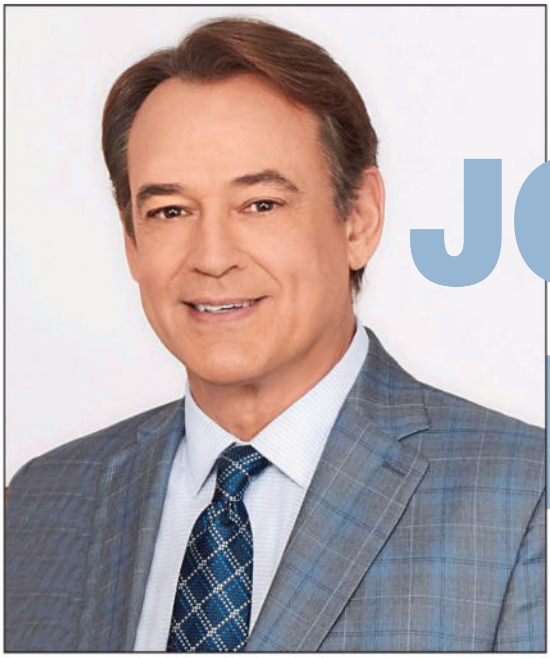
Liz and Franco were another hit duo. Why do you think "Friz" worked so well? "I think the biggest reason is the amount of time they took with the two characters; nothing was rushed because I think even the writers were not sure that they wanted to put Elizabeth and Franco together because we are such an odd pairing, you know? Here's this, like, ex-killer who has this awful past and at that point, Elizabeth was still kind of shining her halo, so it seemed like it wouldn't be easy to write for them. But because of the time they took in developing the relationship, people eventually came around to it, and Roger [Howarth, ex-Franco; Austin] and I worked really well together and really enjoyed working with each other and I think people saw that, as well."

Do you enjoy playing a nurse? "Yes, because deep down, Becky would really love to be in the medical field. Yeah, I am all over that. I think it's hilarious that my character ended up being a nurse on the show because it is something that has always interested me. When I watch TV, I love watching medical shows; like, that's my thing. It truly is like playing house, like playing make-believe, when I get to pretend that I know what I'm talking about in the medical world."

What does it mean to you to be a significant part of the show's legacy as it marks its 60th anniversary? "In a way, I still feel like my role is just a blip in time, just a small part of this monumental, historical milestone we're celebrating. It's hard to wrap your mind around how long the show has been on the air and how many generations of families have watched and fallen in love with these characters and storylines and stayed so loyal. To know that I'm even a small part of that is truly mind-blowing. It's hard to put into words how incredibly grateful I feel to have landed in this place, because I love it with all my heart. I love the people I work with. We truly are a family, in front of the camera and behind the camera — sometimes a dysfunctional one [*laughs*]."


Origin Story: When Elizabeth showed up on Audrey's (Rachel Ames) doorstep in 1997, "She was this troublemaking schemer always up for an adventure or a plan that she knew was going to go wrong," recalls Herbst.

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC



CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

JON Lindstrom

(Ryan Chamberlain, 1992-95, 2018-2023/Kevin Collins, 1993-1997, 2004, 2013-present; on PORT CHARLES, 1997-2003)

Hired for a three-month gig as serial killer Ryan, Jon Lindstrom soon added Ryan's twin, Kevin, to his character arsenal and is still going strong over three decades later.

You'd had a few brief runs on other soaps before GH came calling in 1992 — and, in fact, GH was supposed to be short-term, too. "Yes, it had been conceived as and was meant to be a three-month storyline, for no other purpose than to be what I would call the surgical strike villain. My job was to come in and drive a wedge between Mac and Felicia in order for them to find their way back to each other by overcoming the obstacle of this villain named Ryan Chamberlain. That was in May of 1992, and I thought, 'Well, I'll be able to pay off my credit cards.' But nine months later, the storyline was up at the front of the show, the ratings had come up, and everyone seemed to be talking about Ryan and Felicia and Mac and this great triangle that was playing out. And then I got offered another job, the role of Damian Grimaldi on AS THE WORLD TURNS. So I went to [GH's execs] and said, 'Listen, I'd just as soon stay here; I like this job and I'd like to stay on.' And that's when they came up with Kevin Collins and signed me to a contract."

Do you have a favorite twin? "Oh, Ryan was always more fun to play. You know how, in a ride-around lawn mower, you push the gas, but it only goes so fast because the governor keeps the speed down? Well, Kevin kind of has a governor, whereas Ryan doesn't, and that's one of the ways it was easy to differentiate between the two. One is really repressed and the other isn't!"

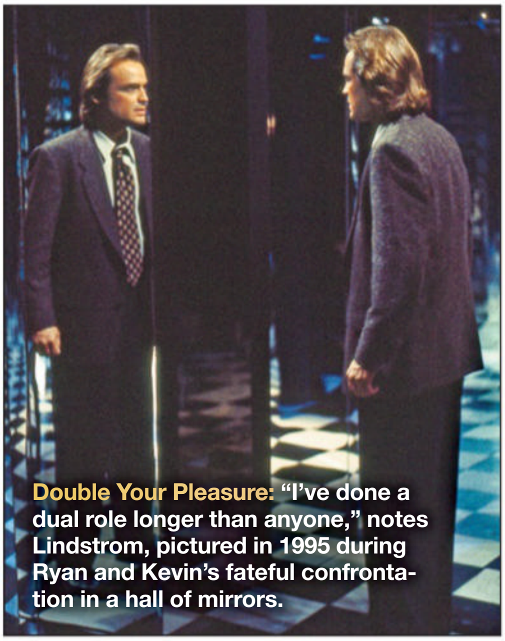
For many years, Kevin was romantically linked to Lucy. What stands out to you about that era? "What stands out the most to me are the years that we spent on PORT CHARLES. One thing I had never liked about the beginnings on GENERAL HOSPITAL is that, though they quickly came up with a second character, Kevin, when forced into the situation, they didn't put a whole lot of thought into what to do with that character afterwards. So while Lucy was off running around in dangerous situations with Luke or whatever, Kevin wasn't really involved and instead they would write what I felt were pretty thin scenes that we used to laugh about because it was like Ricky Ricardo showing up going, 'Lucy, you've got some 'splaining to do!' But when Lynn Latham came in to head-write PORT CHARLES, things changed. She said, 'This triangle thing with Scott and Lucy and Kevin doesn't have real oomph to it, so let's just blow that up.' The next thing we knew, Kevin and Lucy were definitely off on their own thing and it became very active and proactive and had some momentum to it."

You popped up on GH in 2004 when Kevin attended Lila's funeral, then returned in 2013 as part of a wave of veterans asked back in the lead-up to the show's 50th anniversary. Were you pleased to get that call? "Oh, yeah. [Wife] Cady [McClain, Jennifer, DAYS et al] and I had just relocated back to L.A. from New York. I don't even think I had an agent at the time and we have an unlisted phone number. One evening, the landline rings — I mean, who even has a landline anymore?! — and it was [Casting Director] Mark Teschner's office, asking if I wanted to come back for just what you described. My first question was, 'How did you get this number?' It was presented, again, as a short-lived thing: 'Hey, would you like to come back for the 50th? It's no big deal, everybody's doing it just to mark the occasion.' I was like, 'Yeah, sure, why not, I'll do it!' And here we are, 10 years later. I remember walking across the set and I hear, 'Hey, Jon!' I turn around and it's Jack Wagner [ex-Frisco], who I've known since he was a waiter and I was a bartender. I was thinking to myself, 'My God, it's like they just threw us all into a dump truck and pulled into the parking lot and rolled us out in front of GENERAL HOSPITAL!' Then one day, Frank [Valentini, executive producer] stopped me in the hallway and said, 'Are you enjoying being here? Because we'd like to write some things for you.' I said, 'I've always enjoyed being here. I like this gig. So, if you want to use me, go right ahead!' "

And soon, you were paired with the queen herself, Genie Francis (Laura). "I've been so fortunate to hitch my wagon to one half of the comet that was Luke and Laura. You know, there's a reason that Genie is Genie. She's a brilliantly talented woman and also incredibly nice — a remarkable talent, a remarkable person."

The biggest obstacle they've faced came with the surprise return from the dead of Ryan in 2018. "One day, I was asked to come up to Frank's office and he said, 'Shut the door.' I thought, 'This is gonna be really good or really bad!' I shut the door and he said, 'Remember your twin brother who died 25 years ago? He's not dead. Not even close.' I said, 'Okay, great! Let's do it.' I had a great time working with Maura [West, Ava]. What can I say? Because of GH, many blessings have come my way."

What does it mean to you to have such a long and storied association with GH? "The vast majority of Hollywood careers last 10 years. Well, I've tripled that. All I can say is, gratitude, gratitude, gratitude."

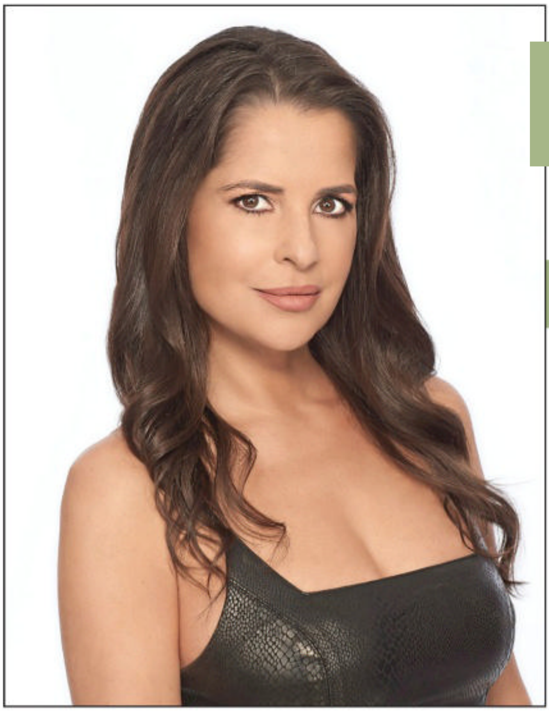


Double Your Pleasure: "I've done a dual role longer than anyone," notes Lindstrom, pictured in 1995 during Ryan and Kevin's fateful confrontation in a hall of mirrors.

WREN MALONE/ABC

KELLY Monaco

(Samantha McCall, 2003-present)


CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Monaco's breakout role as PORT CHARLES's Livvie made her a hot commodity in the daytime world — and her star only continued to rise when she signed on to play Sam.

Multiple shows were vying for you in the wake of PORT CHARLES's cancellation. Why did you go with GH? "I thought GENERAL HOSPITAL was the best soap on the air. My mom was an avid watcher. I remember getting off the bus and her, like, running us kids back home to watch Luke and Laura get married and I was just, like, 'Man, I'd really love to get something on GENERAL HOSPITAL.' Brian Frons, who was head of ABC Daytime at the time, called and said if I accepted their offer, they would create a character for me on GENERAL HOSPITAL. Financially, every other offer was better, but this was my dream — like, GENERAL HOSPITAL was the GOAT, you know? Frank [Valentini, executive producer, who was ONE LIFE TO LIVE's executive producer at the time] was *really* convincing, and I wanted to work with Frank really bad back in the day, but honestly, I didn't want to be that close in proximity to my family [on the East Coast, where OLTL shot]. I was like, 'New York is too close to home!' I just needed the distance; I was super-young, I was in my early 20s, and it was just like, 'GENERAL HOSPITAL all the way!' To me, they were the ultimate. So, I made the move over to GENERAL HOSPITAL and it was seamless and it was awesome and beautiful and intimidating and I was scared s--tless, but I did it! And I'm so glad that I did."

What did you know about the character of Sam coming in? "They told me loosely that she would be sort of a con artist, a grifter, rough and tumble. And I was like, 'Perfect, that's me to a T!' Like, 'That's not gonna be that hard to pull off!' I thought, 'How fun! I get to play a badass chick.' Which, ultimately, in the beginning, was really difficult for me, because the audience, they love to hate a villain and I essentially was a villain coming on the show. But I always say, in the beginning, Sam was a bad girl with good intentions. I feel like the turning point for me with the audience — for me not to get hate from the audience — was after I did DANCING WITH THE STARS two or three years in. People saw me, Kelly, and got to know me, and they were able to differentiate between me and the character. I swear to you, from the first airing of DANCING WITH THE STARS, almost overnight, it was a switch in support, because then I wasn't Sam, the person who broke up Sonny and Carly, the person who slept with Jax — they actually saw me as, 'Oh, that's Kelly over here, and that's the character she plays over there.' Breaking the fourth wall, sometimes that works out badly for people, but for me, it worked in my favor, and I think I was able to gain some respect from the audience and they didn't think I was, like, this trashy whore who was sleeping with her stepfather [*laughs*]."

Is that when you feel like the character started to click, as well? "No, I feel like the turning point with the character clicking was when Sam got pregnant by Sonny and she lost the baby. That's when Sam became really vulnerable, really real. I think it changed how the viewers saw me as an actor and saw the character. It kind of humanized her; you knew she had a heart, and her heart was bleeding into the audience."

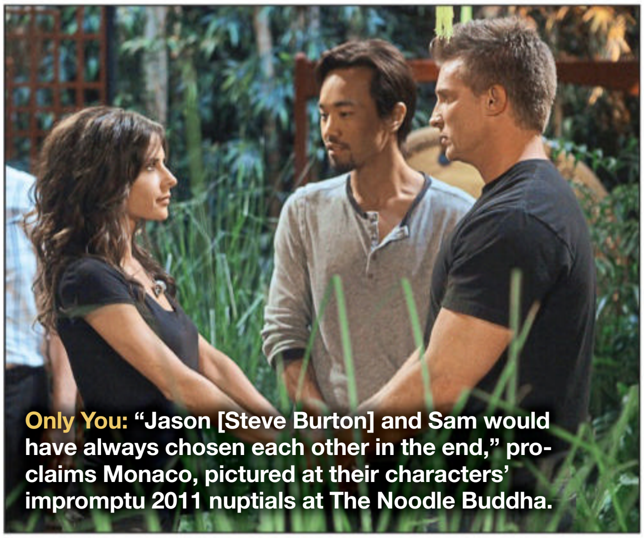
That was also a big turning point for Jason and Sam, one of the biggest pairings the show had produced in years. "It was pretty magical. I think Steve [Burton, ex-Jason] and I had really great chemistry. I think the writers really took their time with the story, and I know Steve had a big hand in that, in making sure that it was slow-played, that nothing was rushed. Everything had to be organic and not forced. So, our natural chemistry as actors translated on top of really great writing, and having the producers, the directors and the right notes and all of the things that make soap magic magical — everyone sprinkled a little bit of their fairy dust in there and it just resonated. Ultimately, in my mind, Sam and Jason were always the end game. Jason and Sam would have always chosen each other in the end."

Do you have a favorite Sam storyline or era? "The original era of Sam and Jason, him offering her $10 million to leave town to them falling madly in love and basically being Bonnie and Clyde. That was *so* much fun as an actor."

Does it warm your heart to think of signature Jason/Sam things like tequilas and dominoes, or the Phoenix and the Dragon? "Yes! I mean, nostalgia! Those are very poignant storylines that people will remember forever when they think about GENERAL HOSPITAL and Sam and Jason."

Is it wild to you that you've known your on-screen sisters, Lexi Ainsworth (Kristina) and Haley Pullos (Molly), for well over a decade? "Yes! Lexi was a teenager and Haley was, what, nine years old? I've watched her grow into a beautiful woman. I'm older than them, but we have grown up with each other. It's interesting how the dynamics of our real-life friendships play into the on-screen relationships because we have known each other for so long, since they were practically toddlers!"

What does your own long history with the show mean to you as you think about GH hitting this 60-year milestone? "It's wild to me that I've been there for almost 20 years! When I think about this milestone and how long I've been there, I'm flabbergasted. It's such a legendary show. I consider it my second home. I'm so honored and blessed to be on GENERAL HOSPITAL."


Only You: "Jason [Steve Burton] and Sam would have always chosen each other in the end," proclaims Monaco, pictured at their characters' impromptu 2011 nuptials at The Noodle Buddha.

PATRICK WYMORE/ABC

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

DOMINIC Zamprogna

(Dante Falconeri, 2009-18, 2019, 2020-present)

GH's months-long hunt for the perfect actor to play Sonny's secret son led Dominic Zamprogna to his daytime destiny.

What most stands out to you about landing the role? "I had kind of set my sights on wanting to be in L.A. working. I had gone a year of not working and was just kind of in the mode of, 'Whatever comes my way, I'm gonna say yes to.' My manager said, 'I want you to tape for GENERAL HOSPITAL.' I didn't know much about the show — my family grew up watching Y&R — but I think that was better for me because I think if I knew more about it, maybe there would have been more nerves. Like, I didn't know who Maurice [Benard, Sonny] was and if I had, maybe I would have had a different mentality going into it. It just felt like the stars aligning, honestly. This role had been developed by [then-Head Writer] Bob Guza as a major role, and they'd been looking [for the right actor] for a long time and it turns out, this was sort of the perfect fit."

Your introductory story — Dante, a cop, doesn't know Sonny is his biological father and goes undercover to take down his mob organization — remains a fan favorite. "And a favorite of mine, for sure. It was kind of like a dream, you know? Like, it just felt too good to be true. I was like, 'Man, when is the other shoe gonna drop?' And it never really dropped! I had thought, 'I'll probably just run the first contract and then I'll be out of a job,' but they wanted to re-sign me and I was like, 'Well, yeah! Let's see what else there is to be done here!' I was where I wanted to be, doing a big show in a really cool story. It was just fun! So, it was a no-brainer to stay. I felt like we were doing some really amazing things, especially in the beginning — there was a great story and great conflict. Dante was introduced and written really beautifully; you could tell they had put so much time and effort into establishing these things."

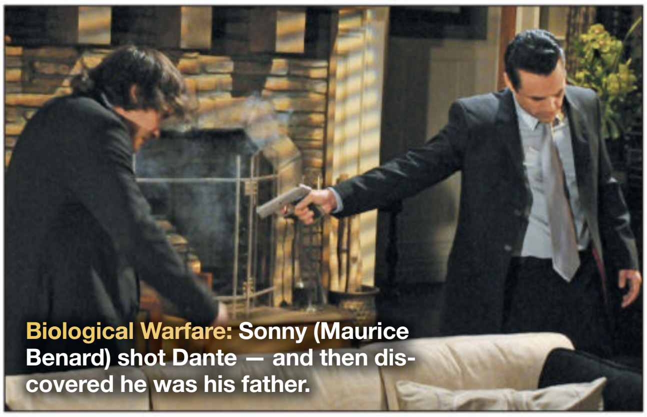
Did it surprise you that Dante stayed true to the PCPD and never got involved in the mob? "Oh, yeah — at the beginning, I was like, 'Okay, he's gonna be a cop until he's not, and then he's gonna join the dark side.' And that never happened, which proves his mettle a little bit, like he's not just a pushover and he's not going to just fold to his father's whims. But hey, I would love for the day to come where he actually has to arrest his father. I think Maurice and I would have a lot of fun with that because it would make for great conflict."

Your chemistry with your GH parents, Maurice and Lisa LoCicero (Olivia) — and the love you can feel between you on screen — has been a throughline of your run. "Yeah, and it's real — that exists on and off camera. And on and off camera, you'll have your little issues, as well, just like a real family! That's another element of what it's like to be on GH. I think back to the beginning and every day it was us hanging out all day long shooting, playing video games in our downtime, going out to events. This was before I was married and had kids, so I had more time on my hands, but things change, and also, the show has changed. The cast is bigger so you don't get to know people as well as you used to get to know people, so the friendships that you made that still exist, you cherish those."

You also had great success with your first on-screen pairing. Why do you think the audience connected so well with the Dante/Lulu romance? "Well, it's Sonny's son and Luke and Laura's daughter — we had that going for us! Actually, when they were chemistry-testing me and Julie [Marie Berman, ex-Lulu], they were also sort of testing her with Jason Cook [ex-Matt], and I would watch them and think, 'They're great together! He's funny, she's funny.' I was like, 'Shoot, I don't know if this is gonna work!' I was kind of sweating it a bit! But ultimately, you know, I feel like Julie and I had a chemistry of our own; we had something that really resonated with people. But it was shocking to me when, at our very first fan event, people showed up with 'Lante' T-shirts on. I was like, 'Whoa!' "

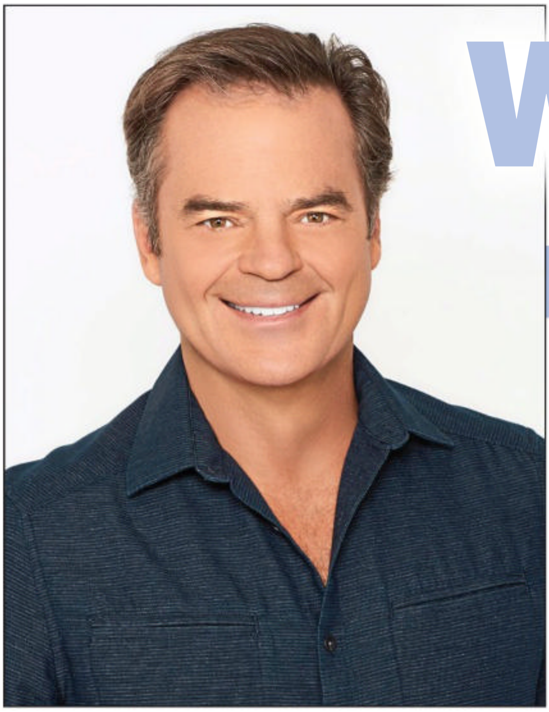
What was it like for you when Julie left and Lulu was recast with Emme Rylan? "That wasn't easy. I don't like that element of soaps. It just feels weird as an actor. I'll never forget the day that Julie left on the table [in the Cassadine lab] and then the next day, Emme woke up on the table! I was like, 'Man, this is hard to get my head around.' But you have to submerge yourself into it and go for the ride, and Emme and I were able to grow together and find something fresh."

What does it mean to you to have found a professional home on such an iconic show and to be part of its 60th anniversary celebration? "It's hard to put into words and really grasp it. Before GH, I'd never been on a show more than five years, let alone a show that had been on almost 50 years when I got here and is now marking 60 years. It just seems kind of surreal! I don't consider myself a big part of that [achievement] — Jackie Zeman [Bobbie], Kin Shriner [Scott], Tony Geary [ex-Luke], Genie Francis [Laura], Lynn Herring [Lucy], those are the guys who kind of put this thing on the map for everybody, and then later, Maurice and Steve [Burton, ex-Jason], and then sure, I came into the picture, but I just feel really lucky to be there, you know? I'm so fortunate to be here. It's a very special thing to be part of."



Biological Warfare: Sonny (Maurice Benard) shot Dante — and then discovered he was his father.

MICHAEL YARISH/ABC



CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

WALLY Kurth

(Ned Quartermaine, 1991-2007, 2012-present)

After a successful run as DAYS's Justin, Wally Kurth considered joining GH a step into the "big leagues".

What you remember about getting the role? "First of all, it was a blessing. Even though I had just finished working DAYS OF OUR LIVES six months earlier, I did need a job. I had bought a house, so I really was looking to work again and I was also really looking forward to working on a show and building a character that I could do something different than what I had done with Justin. I'd seen a little bit of the show because Jane [Elliot, Tracy; ex-Anjelica, DAYS] was on it, so I was aware that Jane's character had a son, Ned. Before I went in to read with [then-Executive Producer] Gloria Monty, Mark [Teschner, casting director] knew who I was and thought my 8x10 was so bad that he actually said, 'I'm not even going to give this to Gloria because she won't want to see this guy.' So when I went in, I was all fired up and was going to be reading with Jane, and Jane said, 'Wally, first of all, take your wedding ring off' — for some reason, she thought that Gloria would not like the fact that I was married — 'and whatever you do, do not tell her that you were on another soap, and especially that you worked with me. Gloria has to discover talent; she doesn't want to bring somebody who's been on another show.' But from the moment I went in there, I wanted to bring almost more of Wally to the character, so I was really excited to play Ned."

What was it like to get the role? "My grandmother watched GENERAL HOSPITAL, so I knew about it. Plus, Luke and Laura were huge and I remember being in college during the wedding and watching that. So I was familiar with it and thought that GENERAL HOSPITAL was the New York Yankees of the soap operas."

What were the early days like for you? "It was a really magical time when I started. Gloria was around for maybe a year and then Wendy [Riche] took over [as EP] and it became a completely different kind of show. I remember she wanted to bring some music and dancing to the show. We were all taking dancing classes and doing scenes where we're talking and dancing and that was sort of illustrative of what Wendy wanted to bring, a completely different energy. And then when Claire [Labine] came on [as head writer], she brought all the Claire magic and then Francesca [James, producer] came and it was just a really magical time in the '90s. When Claire brought in the Eddie Maine character [in 1993], it really allowed me to put the joyfulness of being an actor on display and I just dove right into that. I had a really good attitude for all the craziness that would transpire."

What was it like to create a new dynamic with Jane, who played your lover on DAYS and was now playing your mother? "It was really kind of weird, let's be honest. I just remember Jane saying it was really hard for her to look at me and not bat her eyelashes and try to flirt with me. But when she left DAYS, the love affair with Anjelica disappeared and we were more like rivals and at each other's throats in a way, so that wasn't completely unlike Ned and Tracy; they were pretty feisty with one another."

Ned and Lois were quite a huge pairing. What do you think it is about them that resonated so much with the audience? "The writing was just lovely. They really accented the differences between Ned and Lois and they were an opposites attract type of situation. With Eddie, you got to see a character, sort of literally, take off the suit and tie and put on the leather pants and become more of their 'true self'. That transformation was done in a way that was artistic and authentic and magical. You have to credit Rena [Sofer, ex-Lois], Francesca, Wendy, Shelley [Curtis, producer], Claire and the whole writing team. And I played my part. It was just a great story and it all came together. I say to myself, 'Wow, how lucky am I?', but I look around the show and Sonny and Brenda were a totally wonderful romance that was happening, Stone and Robin were incredible, Lucy and Kevin were making magic, there was the Monica cancer story; it was just one after another, so it wasn't just me. The show during that time was really just wonderful."

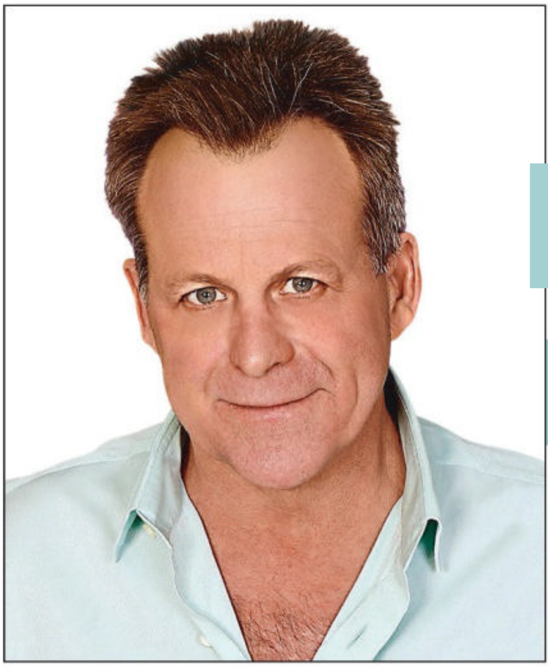
You've had other successful romances, as well. "We tell love stories. Going back to the show [in 2012] and meeting Olivia and having that story was the third time's a charm. I mean, Lois, Alexis and now Olivia? I feel very lucky that I've been able to, hopefully, successfully create a couple that the audience can root for and is enchanted and entertained by."

These days, you are splitting your time between Port Charles and DAYS, where you play Justin. What has it meant to you that both shows have been so accommodating? "I don't know what I did, and I don't know if I deserve it, but I feel just so fortunate and have so, so much gratitude to all the producers who make it happen for me."

What can you say about the fact that you still have an association with GH after all this time? "It means the world to me. I reached out to Frank [Valentini, EP] when John Ingle [ex-Edward] died, and I wanted to remind him that I'm available, that I would love to come back and do what I can to bring the Quartermaines back on the canvas, I think it's an important color. And I've never called anybody or said, 'I think this family is important to the show and I want to do anything I can to keep the Quartermaine legacy going.' Not that he didn't get it, but I think it helped to know that I really did care and was really interested, and thanks to Frank, I'm still there and he's been incredibly accommodating. Incredibly."

Mother, May I? Finding a new dynamic with Jane Elliot (Tracy) as his mother was a weird dynamic for Kurth when he joined GH.

RICK ROWELL/ABC



JIM WARREN

KIN Shriner

(Scott Baldwin, 1977-80, 1981-84, 1988-93, 2000-04, 2007-08, 2013-present; PORT CHARLES, 1997-2000)

■ ***His first major storyline — the Bobbie/Scotty/Laura triangle — helped a then-struggling GH avoid cancellation and established Kin Shriner as a fan fave, a title he's held for 45 years and counting.***

What do you remember about your first day at GH? "At that time, we were live on tape. I thought, 'Wow, we're going to go live at 2!' I said to Peter [Hansen, Lee] and Susan [Brown, Gail], 'Should we run lines?' And they were dressed in tennis outfits! I said, 'Where are you going?' He said, 'Oh, we go play tennis at lunch.' And I thought, 'Wow! They have this down! I hope that I can be able to be like that.' And now I am."

Scotty was paired with Laura, but infamously, Bobbie wanted him, too, so she called her big brother, Luke, to town to help her break them up. Looking back, why do you think that saga was as magical as it was? "Well, you know, Gloria [Monty, then-executive producer] had the wisdom. She knew Jackie's [Zeman, Bobbie] work from ONE LIFE TO LIVE [as scheming Lana], and Genie [Francis, Laura] — I mean, no actress, at 15, could handle what they gave her to do, but she had the chops to do it and she certainly rallied to the call of duty! And then, you know, you get Tony Geary [ex-Luke]. Tony Geary, at the time, was not a leading man, he was not a soap star, but what he was was an incredibly charming, charismatic guy and all the soaps started having their young leading men have perms like him! And that's not how it works — just because Tony Geary has a perm, you can't just give your actors a perm and think they'll be as good as him! It's ridiculous! Tony was one of a kind, you know? It's kind of like what Ginger Rogers did for Fred Astaire: Genie made Tony a leading man, and Tony made Genie a leading ingenue. That was the magic! People come up to me and say, 'Oh, my God, I used to watch Luke and Laura in the '80s — and you, too!' And I say, 'Yeah, I was there before they were Luke and Laura!' "

If only you'd permed your hair, Kin! "That would have been a funny joke! It would have been comedy if I'd said, 'Well, maybe if I perm my hair....' "

Spurned by Laura, Scotty entered his bad boy era, and found female companionship in vixens like Robin Mattson's Heather and Lynn Herring's Lucy. "Robin and me, the two of us were very high ampage, and she gets you even more amped up because she's so amped herself. And Lynn is so fun and so smart; she's very Lucy Coe-ish in real life. Those were good times."

Then Scott fell in love with Dominique, a tragic story that was one of the standout pairings of the early 1990s. "Shell [Danielson, ex-Dominique] decided to quit and they decided to kill her off, but that wasn't the way [it was originally written]. Scotty and Dominique got drunk and got married in Vegas and all of a sudden, she became the love of Scotty's life and she's dying in his arms. I said, 'Shell, why would you leave the show? Don't do it!' But she wanted to leave and so that's how that all came about. It was kind of a fluke. But it wasn't how I wanted it to go."

Scotty has also long been identified with his outlandish courtroom antics. "You know, they stuck me in a courtroom more than I really wanted to be because the courtroom is no fun! There's a lot of dialogue, but you also have to make it fun and exciting, and that is not easy when you're dealing with legal dialogue. In daytime, you've got to make it your own — and sometimes, to do that, you've got to go against what they want you to do. You've got to have a point of view as the character or it's not gonna work."

Scotty reunited with Laura a few times after her split from Luke. What stands out to you about working with Genie later in your GH career? "I think it was in 2001 that somebody decided, 'Let's rekindle Scotty and Laura.' They did a whole episode where Scotty said, 'Let's go back to Hollywood and have a second go-round of our honeymoon.' He rented a production company and we had costumes and I played Humphrey Bogart [in *Casablanca*], we played Keystone Cops. We took a day to shoot it on a stage, just Genie and me, and she was dialed up. I watched it on YouTube because somebody posted it; I hadn't seen it in, like, 20 years, and I was like, 'Well, Scotty and Laura were back in business!' I don't know what happened, how it derailed — I think Genie left the show and then I left the show, but whenever I get to do scenes with Genie, I'm happy."

While you worked opposite Roger Howarth (Austin) as Scotty's son, Franco, which one of you came up with the most bits in rehearsal? "Let me just put it this way: When they did the Christmas reel of outtakes, 80 percent of the reel was Roger and me. We would run lines and then, whatever happened, happened! I had a great partner there because he is a funny guy and he's going to play the humor wherever possible."

You've come and gone a lot over the years, but you've been back in Port Charles consistently now since 2013. "Even when I left GENERAL HOSPITAL, I'd come back for a year, then come back for another stint. It's changed a lot, but I'm still with all of my peers. It's not like I'm surrounded by a bunch of kids and I'm the oldest guy there! We laugh all day and when we have scenes and the cameras roll, the characters just come out. Then you say, 'Maurice [Benard, Sonny], did you see that bit I did?' 'Yeah, I saw it.' It's nothing but fun!"

Dying Young: **Dominique's (Shell Danielson) tragic demise was a detour from Scotty's typical comedic fare. "It wasn't how I wanted it to go," Shriner admits.**

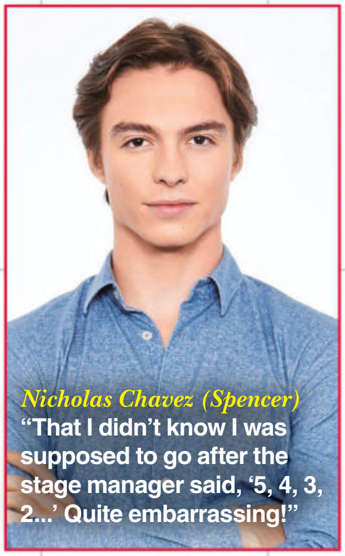
ABC

Q: WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT YOUR FIRST DAY AT GH?

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Tajh Bellow (TJ)

"What stands out to me most is how the cast and crew treated me on my first day. Everyone was very kind and supportive! I received genuine words of encouragement and advice that reflected that my castmates really wanted to bring the best out of me, from the very beginning."



Nicholas Chavez (Spencer)

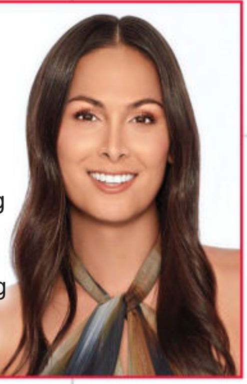
"That I didn't know I was supposed to go after the stage manager said, '5, 4, 3, 2...' Quite embarrassing!"

PHOTOS: RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC

ADAM HENDERSHOTT

Evan Hofer (Dex)

"What stands out to me most is how warm and generous Maurice Benard [Sonny] was. I was intimidated by the entire setting, because it's so different from how the sets of other kinds of shows function. I met Maurice right before we did our first take, we did it, and he looks at me and goes, 'You're a good actor.' And I was like, 'Thanks!' From that moment on, he took me under his wing and I'll never be able to thank him enough."


CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Cassandra James (Terry)

"I think I was most impressed by the scale of the production. There's multiple sets on stage. And there's hundreds of lights on the most amazing rig. It's iconic. There's a special magic that happens on a long-running studio set like ours. I still find myself taking it all in."

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

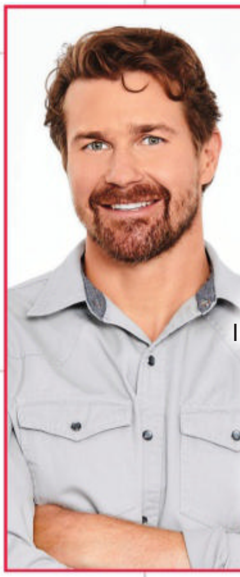
Amanda Setton (Brook Lynn)

"Everyone's kindness! From hair and makeup to the producers to the entire cast and crew, every single person made me feel welcome from the moment I met them. There's truly something special about GH. It's such a collaborative, warm, loving environment where everyone just wants to support one another, bringing out the best in each other, and doing great work. And that positive energy was evident from the start!"

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Avery Pohl (Esme)

"I think what I remember most about my first day was just this sense of being overwhelmed. It's quite a nerve-wracking scenario to walk into. My first scenes were with Genie [Francis, Laura], Jon [Lindstrom, Kevin] and Nick [Chavez, Spencer] and I had to speak French! My French, which had previously consisted of '*Bonjour'* and not much else. I was shaking as I walked up onto the set, but I remember a very welcoming crew of people and a very fast-paced filming scenario that definitely took a little bit of time to adjust to."

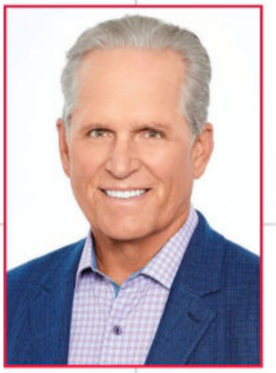


Josh Kelly (Cody)

"It was terrifyingly challenging. I didn't know anyone, and it was a scene with a whole bunch of people, a whole bunch of extras, at the Metro Court pool. I couldn't have my script accessible, so I had to try and be off book completely. I wasn't in as good shape as I should have been and I was terribly self-conscious and uncomfortable, but I tried to do my best. And hopefully I'm making up for whatever shirtless failings I had before [*laughs*]!"

Tanisha Harper (Jordan)

"What most stands out to me about my first day was how fast they filmed the scenes and how many they could do in a day. I was blown away! Everyone was so warm and welcoming, from the executives to the talent, beauty teams, camera people and everyone in between. Everyone made me feel right at home, were extremely patient with me as I learned the process, and were eager to show me the ropes, something I will forever be grateful for."



Gregory Harrison (Gregory)

"Well, considering the terror I was feeling to be doing a soap opera for the first time in my 52-year career, and knowing I'd only get one take following one rehearsal, I was thrilled to not blow it, and to get such a warm reception and such positive feedback from all involved. The terror subsided and it's been a joy ever since."

Q: WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST MEMORABLE EPISODE OF GH?

Tabyana Ali (Trina)

"Definitely the courtroom scenes when Trina was on trial [having been set up by Esme on charges of releasing the Cameron/Josslyn sex tape]. They were challenging because, obviously, I've never been to jail before, I've never been in a place where I've been accused of something that drastic and I could go to jail, and I also had to incorporate feelings of, 'I still love this guy [Spencer] who has turned on me.' "

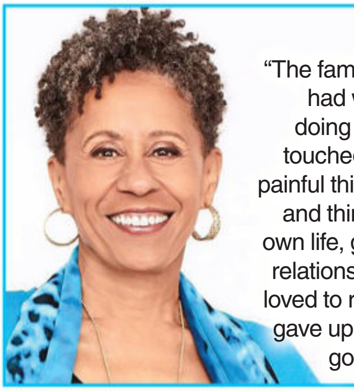
PHOTOS: RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC

Sofia Mattsson (Sasha)

"It must be my first episode ever! When Curtis first met with Sasha to investigate if she could be Nina's daughter. It was my first time ever working on a soap and I was extremely nervous, especially knowing the fast pace and how we'd most likely only get one take. I stayed up all night saying my lines at least 100 times so I wouldn't mess up. Thankfully, Donnell [Turner, Curtis] has such a calming and professional presence and helped me a lot so I'm really glad the scenes were with him. And it was so much fun! I remember thinking it went by so fast and I really wanted to just keep filming and get to play more. At that time, I didn't know if my character would ever come back. Thankfully she did and I'm so grateful!"

James Patrick Stuart (Valentin)

"My first day on GENERAL HOSPITAL, I appeared as Theo, a rain-soaked Greek fisherman who had washed ashore on Cassadine Island. I was very proudly sporting an authentic mustache that had taken me weeks to grow. I met EP Frank Valentini for the first time when he came down to the studio floor to introduce himself. Later that day, we shot a sequence when Theo first reveals himself to be an impostor. I knocked on the door and entered with a handgun and some henchmen and, before a stunned group of castmates in the living room, including Genie Francis [Laura] and Maura West [Ava], announced that I wasn't, in fact, Theo. 'I am *Valentine Cassadeen*!' I declared. There was an awkward silence followed by, 'Cut!' Then somewhere in the darkness behind the cameras came Frank's voice: 'Nobody told him how to say his name?' "



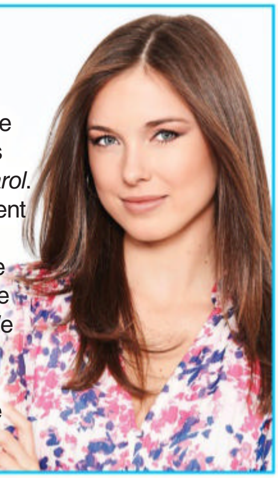
CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Vernee Watson (Stella)

"The family counseling session that Stella had with Curtis and Jordan. I enjoyed doing that. It was so well-written, and it touched on some really sensitive, deep, painful things that Stella had gone through and things that she has sacrificed in her own life, giving up her own career and her relationship with someone that she really loved to raise her sister's kids. She said, 'I gave up my life for these kids and I'm not gonna stop fighting for them now!' "

Cynthia Watros (Nina)

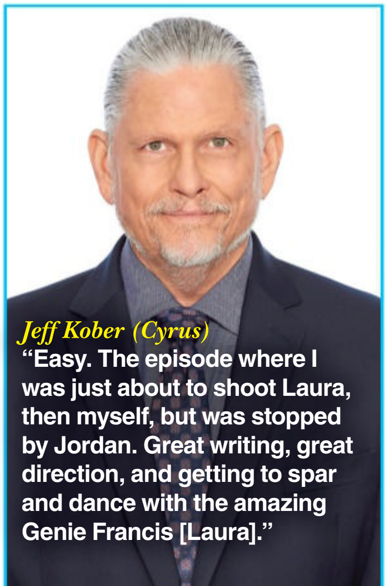
"When Nina and Sonny sat on the bench when he was off his medication. She was trying to get him to start retaking his meds. That image of Sonny and Nina and how vulnerable he was ... and it was the turning point in the relationship."



Katelyn MacMullen (Willow)

"The most memorable episode for me has to be GENERAL HOSPITAL's take on *A Christmas Carol*. The wardrobe department put together all these amazing costumes. The sets were awesome. We were dancing all day. We got to play completely different characters and step into a different time period. It was so fun!"

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC



Jeff Kober (Cyrus)

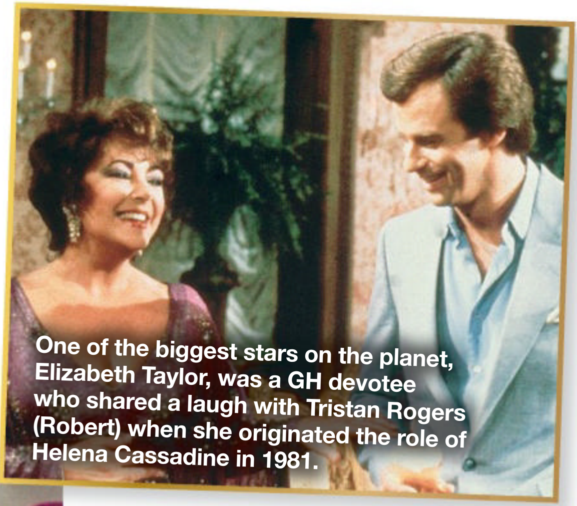
"Easy. The episode where I was just about to shoot Laura, then myself, but was stopped by Jordan. Great writing, great direction, and getting to spar and dance with the amazing Genie Francis [Laura]."

Brook Kerr (Portia)

"The time Portia chose to risk her medical career to wake up Oz from his medically induced coma so that he could be a witness and clear Trina in her trial because the jury was coming back soon. Oh, Lord!"

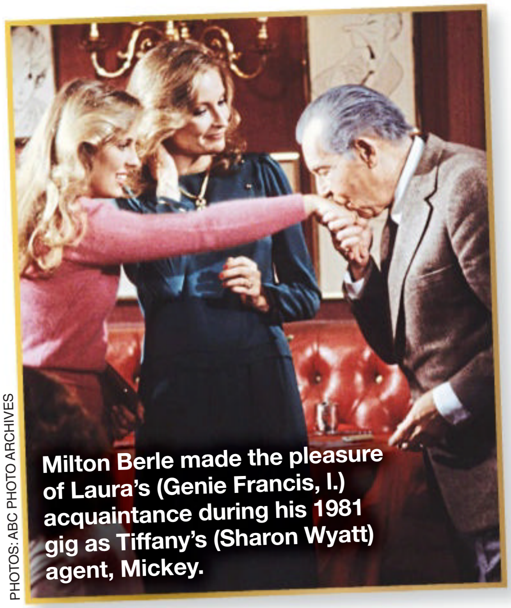
BE OUR GUESTS

These celebs notched Port Charles cameos.



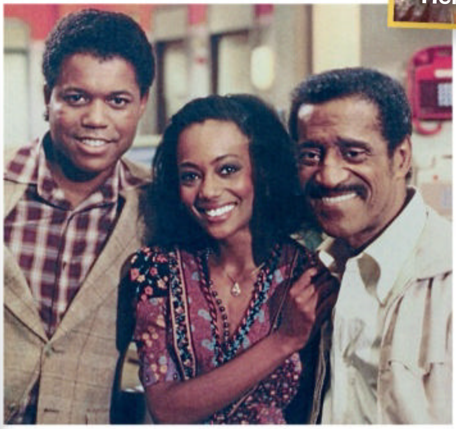
One of the biggest stars on the planet, Elizabeth Taylor, was a GH devotee who shared a laugh with Tristan Rogers (Robert) when she originated the role of Helena Cassadine in 1981.

ABC



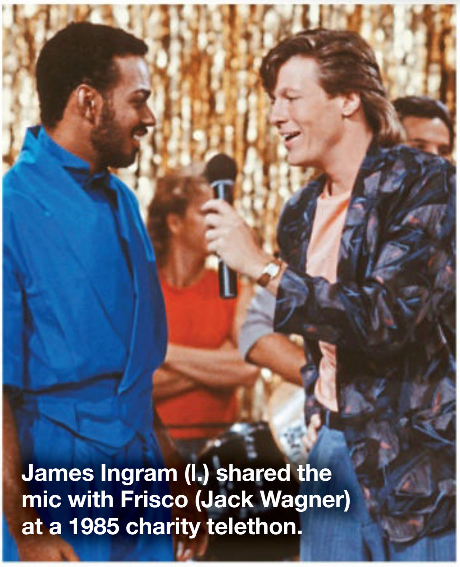
Milton Berle made the pleasure of Laura's (Genie Francis, l.) acquaintance during his 1981 gig as Tiffany's (Sharon Wyatt) agent, Mickey.

PHOTOS: ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

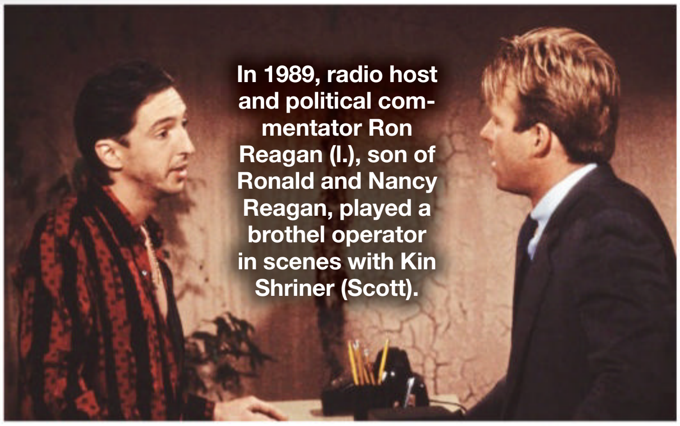


In 1982, Bryan's (Todd Davis, l., with Bianca Ferguson, Claudia) father, Eddie, a recovering alcoholic, came to town — in the form of megastar Sammy Davis, Jr.

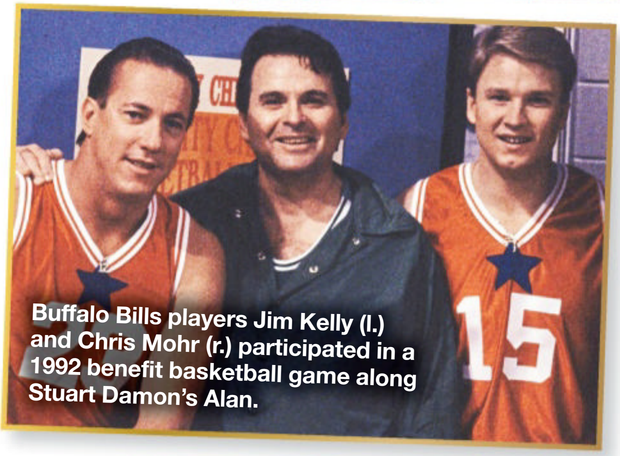
ABC



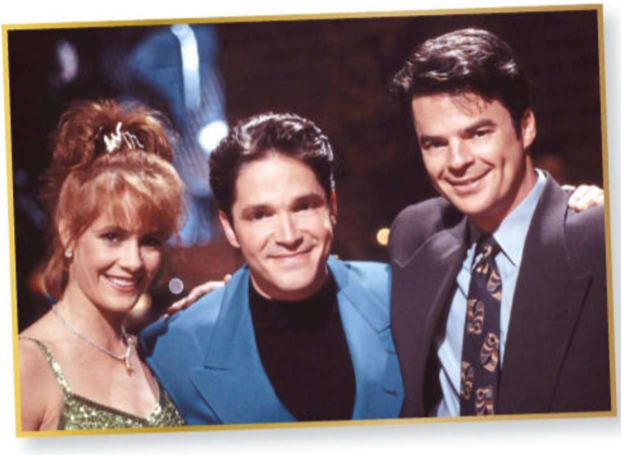
James Ingram (l.) shared the mic with Frisco (Jack Wagner) at a 1985 charity telethon.



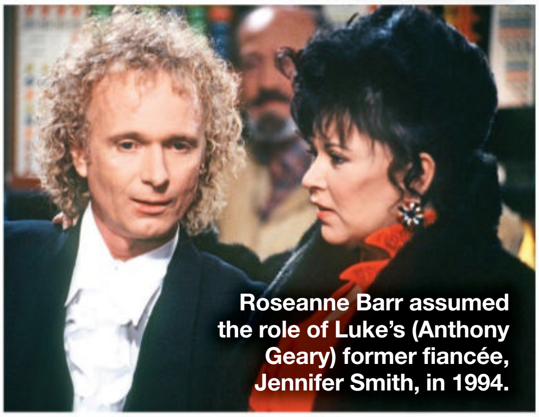
In 1989, radio host and political commentator Ron Reagan (l.), son of Ronald and Nancy Reagan, played a brothel operator in scenes with Kin Shriner (Scott).



Buffalo Bills players Jim Kelly (l.) and Chris Mohr (r.) participated in a 1992 benefit basketball game along Stuart Damon's Alan.



Cheryl Richardson (Jenny) and Wally Kurth (Ned) flanked saxophonist Dave Koz when he performed at The Outback in 1992; his "Faces of the Heart" was GH's theme song from 1993-2004.



Roseanne Barr assumed the role of Luke's (Anthony Geary) former fiancée, Jennifer Smith, in 1994.

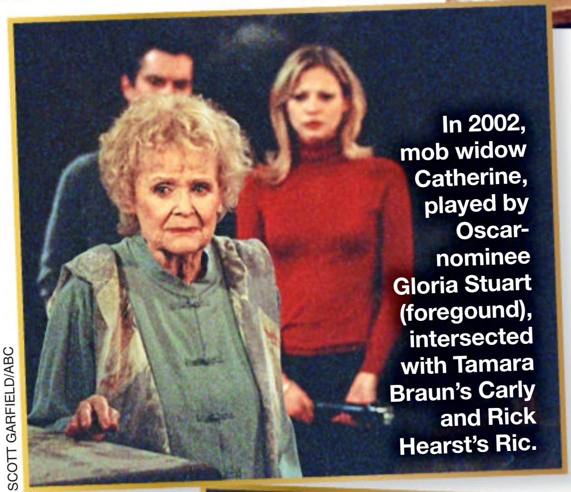
MICHAEL YARISH/ABC

Blues legend B.B. King was the headliner when Luke opened a blues club in 1995.

MICHAEL YARISH/ABC

TONY DAVID/ABC

98 Degrees (seated) sampled the fine fare at Kelly's with Nikolas (Tyler Christopher, l.), Elizabeth (Rebecca Herbst) and Juan (Michael Saucedo) when they were in town to perform at Luke's in 1999.



In 2002, mob widow Catherine, played by Oscar-nominee Gloria Stuart (foregound), intersected with Tamara Braun's Carly and Rick Hearst's Ric.

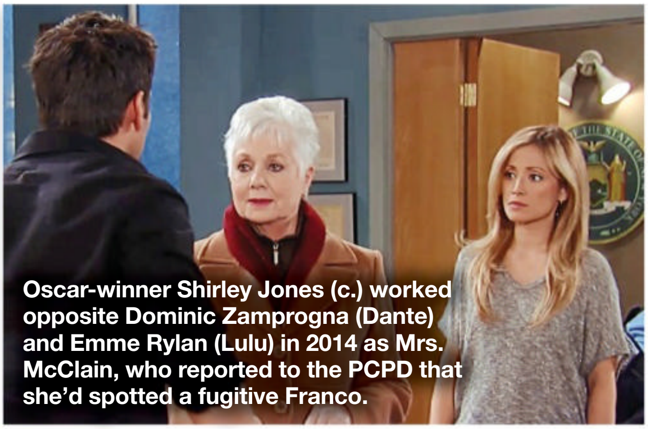
SCOTT GARFIELD/ABC

Katie Couric popped in as gunshot-wounded Nikolas's physician, Kelly, in 2013.

RON TOM/ABC

GREY'S ANATOMY fave Chandra Wilson has played several different P.C. characters; her first, in 2014, was as a patient of Kevin's who encountered Franco (Roger Howarth).

TODD WAWRYCHUK/ABC



Oscar-winner Shirley Jones (c.) worked opposite Dominic Zamprogna (Dante) and Emme Rylan (Lulu) in 2014 as Mrs. McClain, who reported to the PCPD that she'd spotted a fugitive Franco.

ABC

ESPN's Stephen A. Smith, a lifelong GH viewer, parlayed his 2007 spot as a reporter into a recurring role as Sonny's surveillance expert, Brick, which kicked off in 2016.

RICK ROWELL/ABC

In 2018, Olivia (Lisa LoCicero, l.) clashed with Cook 2, played by Food Network fave Carla Hall.

TODD WAWRYCHUK/ABC

GOLDEN Road

GH has had great success at the Daytime Emmys.

1979

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Peter Hansen (Lee)

1981

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Supporting Actress
Jane Elliot (Tracy)

1982

Outstanding Lead Actor
Anthony Geary (Luke)

Outstanding Supporting Actor
David Lewis (Edward)

1984

Outstanding Drama Series

1989

Outstanding Juvenile Female
Kimberly McCullough (Robin)

1991

Outstanding Lead Actress
Finola Hughes (Anna)

1993

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Gerald Anthony (Marco)

1995

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Drama Series Writing Team

Outstanding Supporting Actress
Rena Sofer (Lois)

Outstanding Younger Actor
Jonathan Jackson (Lucky)

Jackson

PHOTOS: RON GALELLA/GETTY IMAGES

1996

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Younger Actress
Kimberly McCullough (Robin)

McCullough

1997

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Younger Actress
Sarah Brown (Carly)

1998

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Steve Burton (Jason)

Outstanding Younger Actor
Jonathan Jackson (Lucky)

Outstanding Younger Actress
Sarah Brown (Carly)

1999

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Drama Series Writing Team

Outstanding Lead Actor
Anthony Geary (Luke)

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Stuart Damon (Alan)

Outstanding Younger Actor
Jonathan Jackson (Lucky)

2000

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Lead Actor
Anthony Geary (Luke)

Outstanding Supporting Actress
Sarah Brown (Carly)

Brown

2002

Outstanding Younger Actor
Jacob Young (Lucky)

2003

Outstanding Drama Series Writing Team

Outstanding Lead Actor
Maurice Benard (Sonny)

Outstanding Supporting Actress
Vanessa Marcil (Brenda)

2004

Outstanding Lead Actor
Anthony Geary (Luke)

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Rick Hearst (Ric)

Outstanding Younger Actor
Chad Brannon (Zander)

2005

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Supporting Actress
Natalia Livingston (Emily)

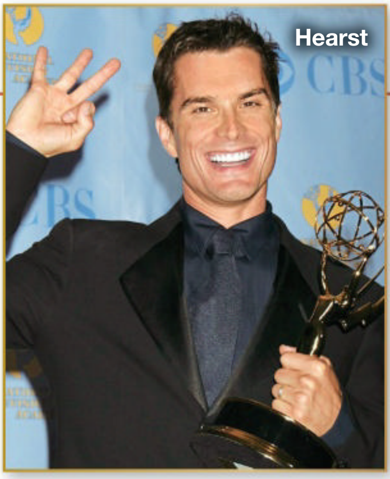
2006

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Lead Actor
Anthony Geary (Luke)

2007

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Rick Hearst (Ric)



EVANS WARD/JPI

Outstanding Supporting Actress
Genie Francis (Laura)

2008

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Lead Actor
Anthony Geary (Luke)

2009

Outstanding Drama Series Writing Team

Outstanding Younger Actress
Julie Marie Berman (Lulu)

2010

Outstanding Younger Actress
Julie Marie Berman (Lulu)

2011

Outstanding Lead Actress
Laura Wright (Carly)

JILL JOHNSON/JPI

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Jonathan Jackson (Lucky)

2012

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Lead Actor
Anthony Geary (Luke)

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Jonathan Jackson (Lucky)

Outstanding Supporting Actress
Nancy Lee Grahn (Alexis)

2013

Outstanding Supporting Actress
Julie Marie Berman (Lulu)

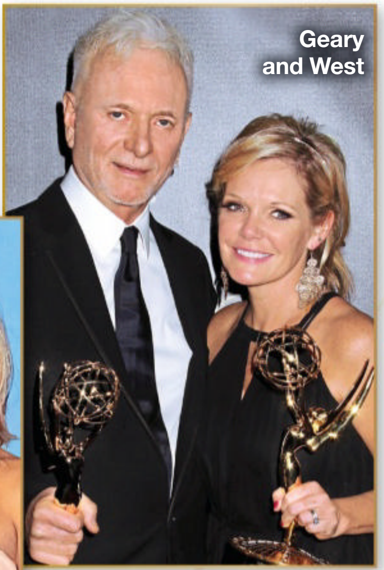
Outstanding Younger Actress
Kristen Alderson (Starr)

2015

Outstanding Lead Actor
Anthony Geary (Luke)

Outstanding Lead Actress
Maura West (Ava)

STEVEN BERGMAN



Outstanding Supporting Actor
Chad Duell (Michael)

2016

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Lead Actor
Tyler Christopher (Nikolas)

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Sean Blakemore (Shawn)

Outstanding Younger Actor
Bryan Craig (Morgan)

2017

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Younger Actor
Bryan Craig (Morgan)

Outstanding Younger Actress
Lexi Ainsworth (Kristina)

2018

Outstanding Younger Actress
Chloe Lanier (Nelle)

2019

Outstanding Lead Actor
Maurice Benard (Sonny)

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Max Gail (Mike)

Outstanding Supporting Actress
Vernee Watson (Stella)

JILL JOHNSON/JPI

Outstanding Younger Actress
Hayley Erin (Kiki)

2020

Outstanding Supporting Actress
Tamara Braun (Kim)

2021

Outstanding Drama Series

Outstanding Lead Actor
Maurice Benard (Sonny)

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Max Gail (Mike)

2022

Outstanding Drama Series

JILL JOHNSON/JPI

Outstanding Supporting Actor
Jeff Kober (Cyrus)

Outstanding Supporting Actress
Kelly Thiebaud (Britt)

Outstanding Younger Performer
Nicholas Chavez (Spencer)

60 and SPEC

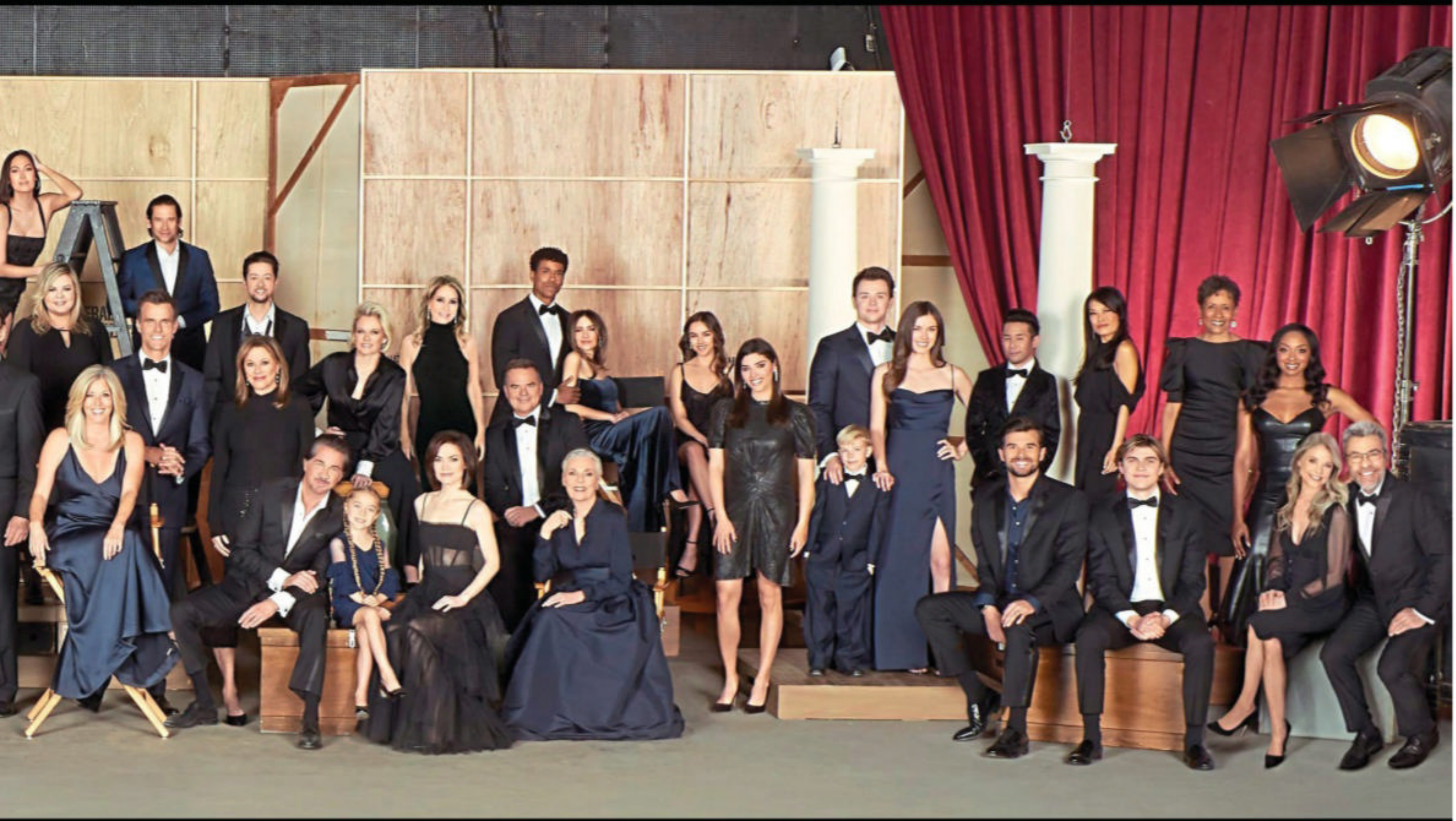
(From l.) Josh Kelly (Cody), Charles Shaughnessy (Victor), Sofia Mattsson (Sasha), Carolyn Hennesy (Diane), Tristan Rogers (Scorpio), Lynn Herring (Lucy), James Patrick Stuart (Valentin), Kin Shriner (Scott), Finola Hughes (Anna) and Jacklyn Zeman (Bobbie)

(From l.) Robert Gossett (Marshall), Donnell Turner (Curtis), Brook Kerr (Portia), Nicholas Chavez (Spencer), Dominic Zamprogna (Dante), Tabyana Ali (Trina), Kelly Monaco (Sam), Avery Pohl (Esme), Kathleen Gati (Obrecht), Cynthia Watros (Nina), Eden McCoy (Josslyn), Maurice Benard (Sonny), Evan Hofer (Dex), Gregory Harrison (Gregory), Genie Francis (Laura), Jon Lindstrom (Kevin), Cassandra James (Terry), Kirsten

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

TACULAR

The cast of GH posed for a new group photo



Storms (Maxie), Laura Wright (Carly), Cameron Mathison (Drew), Roger Howarth (Austin), Bradford Anderson (Spinelli), Nancy Lee Grahn (Alexis), Michael Easton (Finn), Maura West (Ava), Jophielle Love (Violet), Rebecca Herbst (Elizabeth), Lisa LoCicero (Olivia), Wally Kurth (Ned), Tajh Bellow (TJ), Haley Pullos (Molly), Jane Elliot (Tracy), Lexi Ainsworth (Kristina), Amanda Setton (Brook Lynn), Viron Weaver (Wiley), Chad Duell (Michael) and Katelyn MacMullen (Willow)

(From l.) Parry Shen (Brad), Josh Swickard (Chase), Lydia Look (Selina), William Lipton (Cameron), Vernee Watson (Stella), Tanisha Harper (Jordan), Kristina Wagner (Felicia) and John J. York (Mac)

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

KIRSTEN Storms

(Maxie Jones, 2005-present)

After making her mark as DAYS's Belle, Kirsten Storms moved to Port Charles to play everyone's favorite fashionista.

How did the role of Maxie come your way? "I had been working on a CBS show, CLUBHOUSE. We got through, I think, 11 episodes of season 1 and got canceled. Frank [Valentini, executive producer] was working at ONE LIFE TO LIVE at that time and I got offered a part on ONE LIFE. My family was in California and I didn't want to move to New York, so I said, 'Hey, if there's something on GENERAL HOSPITAL, I would love to talk about joining that show.' So it just worked out. I went in and met with [then-EP] Jill Farren Phelps and didn't know what the part was for, and then found out while I was talking to her that they were aging the role of Maxie. I left there and then got a call that they wanted me to join. I was so excited because I had been watching [GH] for the few years before that."

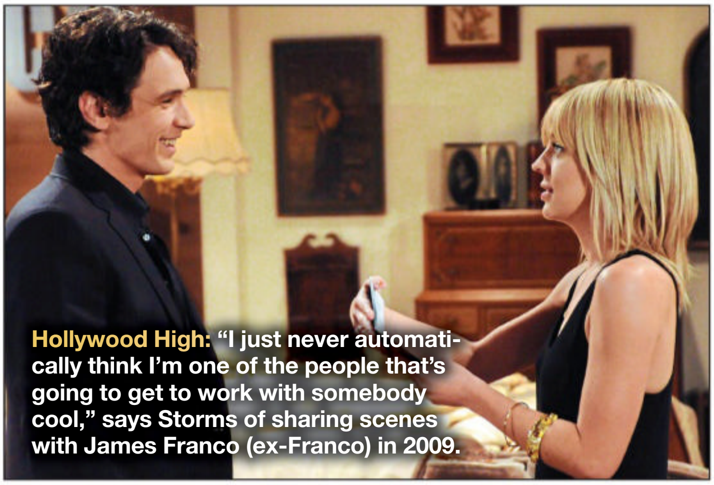
What do you remember about your first day? "I remember my first day there when I saw Steve Burton [ex-Jason] in the hallway, I fangirled quietly in my room. Seeing the cast members there that I now know so well, really, I got so excited and I was thrilled to be working with them."

You came in with a lot of experience under your belt, not only soap experience but as a child star. Were you nervous about stepping into this role? "I was definitely nervous. I don't think any amount of experience could make me not feel nervous when starting a new job, or even daily when I go up to set for my first item; I always have a bit of nerves. So, yeah, I definitely was nervous, not so much about taking on the role, only because when they explained to me who Maxie was, I was excited. It wasn't a character type that I had played before. I usually got cast as the good girl next door that the boy has the crush on and Maxie was a bit more edgy. So I was excited to take that on. I was more nervous about seeing Maurice Benard [Sonny] walk by."

What storylines stand out from your early days as Maxie? "Probably the storyline that sticks out most for me in my earlier days would be when Maxie stole drugs for Lucky from the hospital and then faked having a miscarriage by throwing herself down the flight of stairs. It's also one of the crazier storylines I've done, which is probably why it sticks out so much. I love how much trouble she got into in the earlier days; she's definitely calmed down. I'd love to see more of that side of her pop up every once in a while."

Do you have a favorite storyline? "My all-time favorite storyline is the 'Spixie' storyline and working with Bradford [Anderson, Spinelli]. I think he's such a fantastic actor and incredibly intelligent. I also think he has one of the hardest parts to play on GH because his dialogue is so difficult and there's always a lot of it, but he makes it sound like he knows what he's talking about when he delivers it. I just admire him and enjoy working with him a lot and I felt like we had great chemistry. And the addition of Steve Burton to that, when it was the three of us, was like gold to me."

You got to be part of the Franco storyline when it first started in 2009 with James Franco. What was that experience like? "That was really cool and interesting and different. I mean, when I heard he was coming to work on the show, I didn't in a million years think I was going to be one of the people that they put in his storyline. I don't know why, I just never automatically think I'm one of the people that's going to get to work with somebody cool. But he was more nervous than I expected and I loved that because that told me he was taking it seriously and he wanted to do a good job; he didn't come in with a huge ego thinking he was better than what we were doing. I got along with him pretty well. I guess I was nervous to work with him, just because at the time, all his movies and stuff were coming out."


Hollywood High: "I just never automatically think I'm one of the people that's going to get to work with somebody cool," says Storms of sharing scenes with James Franco (ex-Franco) in 2009.

MICHAEL YARISH/ABC

Maxie and Nathan were a popular duo. How was it working with Ryan Paevey? "Ryan was cool to work with because he was different than anyone I've worked with before. We had great on-screen chemistry and the fans loved seeing us together. That's always something that makes you feel good and it made me want to do a good job in that storyline."

How would you describe your relationship with your on-screen family, Kristina Wagner (Felicia), Jack Wagner (ex-Frisco) and John J. York (Mac)? "They're great. I love when I get to work with them; I love the family dynamic between them. I think it's always an honor to work with cast members who have been there for that long. Kristina is by far one of the sweetest people I've ever met in my life. She's always in a joyful, happy mood and gives great hugs. John is a ham and I love that; I'm a sucker for a good bit and he's always down to do that. I haven't worked with Jack in years, but my mom used to watch MELROSE PLACE [where he played Peter] when I was growing up, so I knew him immediately and was starstruck when I met Jack, for sure."

You joined the show in 2005. What does it mean for you to be there to mark the 60th anniversary? "I started right before my 21st birthday and I'm so grateful to have been there this long and to still love going in there and working on set with this amazing cast and crew. It's been a crazy ride, and 18 years has gone by so fast. I don't feel that old!"

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

CHAD Duell

Michael Corinthos (2010-present)

Duell got off to a rocky start when he assumed the role of Carly's firstborn, but 13 years and one Emmy victory later, he says, "I thought I'd be here for a quick run and then go, but I like the consistency and the people. I'm very blessed to have a job like this."

How did you get cast as Michael? "I'd read for Mark [Teschner, casting director] a few times. This time in particular, I was originally reading for the role of Kristina's love interest. They liked me enough that they brought me back for a secret audition. I didn't know; I thought it was to read for the same role, I didn't know that I was reading for Michael because he was already being played by somebody [Drew Garrett]. It went really well and a few days later, my manager at the time said, 'Hey, man, I have some crazy news,' and he told me, 'They want to make you one of the main characters, one of the main family members.' "

What was your first day like? "I just remember showing up and being terrible when I started because I was so nervous. They fired somebody for me and some people there were really shocked by it and I felt so much pressure. My first scenes, I had the head writer and the producer in my eye line with their arms crossed, watching me, and I was having to pick up a storyline at the high point of it, after Michael killed Claudia and was on the run. I was so stressed out and in my head. Maurice [Benard, Sonny], he wasn't the biggest fan of me at first because he was close with the other Michael and that made me feel more insecure. So, all these things were just stacked against me and I thought I was gonna get fired. It started out chaotic, but I found my footing."

What was the turning point for you? "It was in the courtroom scenes, when Michael confessed to killing Claudia. I could sense the energy and the pressure around, 'This kid is not ready for this.' Because I was so scared and in my head and I had a lot of dialogue, I could sense the doubt and hesitancy of, 'Is he going to be able to handle this much dialogue? It's the heaviest workload he's had and he's already struggled with what he had.' I got through it in one take and I wouldn't say it was an amazing performance, but it was something that showed that I could do this, and it gave me, from that point forward, a boost in confidence. That was a breakthrough moment; it was kind of like a big exhale."

What are your fondest memories of your early years? "I always enjoyed the bigger weddings because we all got together, the whole cast, and it was so fun to be there with everybody, lots of joking around and socializing. There was always some sort of crazy drama going on that didn't involve me but that I could react to, and it was always fun and interesting to watch. Yeah, I miss those big group scenes we had when I first started because it gave us more to time to just have fun with each other on set."

Michael is in a unique position on the show because he's a member of three prominent families, the Spencers, the Quartermaines and the Corinthoses. "Those are legacy families that have been on for decades, and I love that I get to interact with so many legendary characters. I am really lucky to get to be in all of those worlds and I do enjoy bouncing around and being in so many different types of storylines with family drama. There are fantastic actors in each of the families. I'm spoiled!"

Over the years, you've been handed a lot of heavy material, perhaps most notable when Michael turned against Sonny for killing A.J., for which you won an Emmy. "I like playing Michael's darker side when it's justified and Sonny killing A.J. was the spark that sent Michael down that dark path and it felt really justified, it felt real. Winning the Emmy, that was really cool. It was such a surreal moment. When I got up [to the podium] I tried to be like Matthew McConaughey [in *Dazed and Confused*] saying, 'All right, all right, all right.' I was like, 'Wait, that was pretty lame.' No one reacted to it, so I don't think I even said it properly!"

What goes through your mind when you think about GH hitting the 60-year mark? "Sixty years is unbelievable! I think about all the lives we've touched; even with the storylines I've done, I've had people come up to me and talk about, 'I've gone through something like that and you kind of helped me get through it.' The storylines on the show have touched every possible thing someone can go through, and we've helped people, or just helped them take their minds off things and escape."

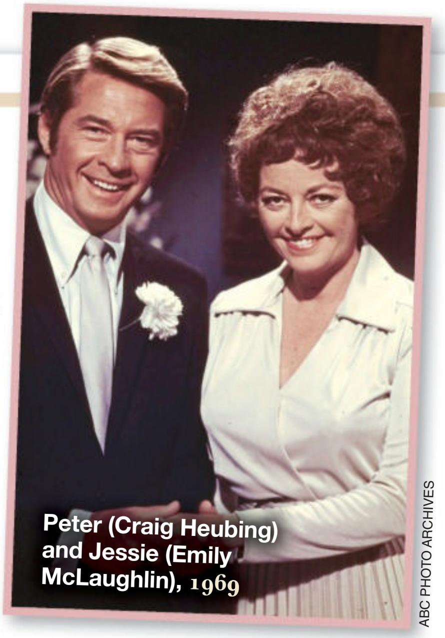
What does it mean to you to be a part of the show's legacy? "When I originally wanted to be an actor, soap operas didn't even cross my mind, and I didn't think that I was going to be here this long at first. It's very fast-paced and the work can be difficult but I get to be part of a show that's been on for 60 years, that has been a part of people's families for generations. It's such a staple in television and that I've been on it for 13 years is really cool when I think about it. I have so many fond memories of those 13 years. It's been a lot of fun, a lot of growth and it's taught me a lot, not just as an actor but as a man. Being part of this show been quite a journey in so many aspects of my life, and I'm just grateful that it's still going and that I'm still working with some of the same people that have been there since I started."

You Gotta Have Friends: As a newbie, "Steve Burton [ex-Jason] helped me a lot," Duell recalls. "He took me under his wing and I probably wouldn't have gotten where I got without his help in the beginning."

PATRICK WYMORE/ABC

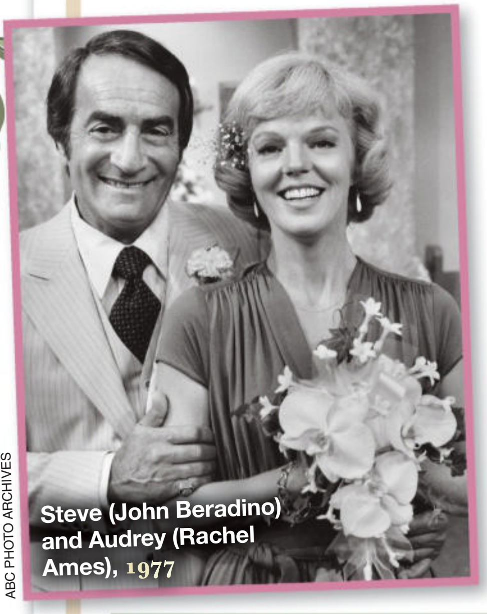
THE *Wedding* MARCH

Six decades of GH nuptials.



Peter (Craig Heubing) and Jessie (Emily McLaughlin), 1969

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES



Steve (John Beradino) and Audrey (Rachel Ames), 1977

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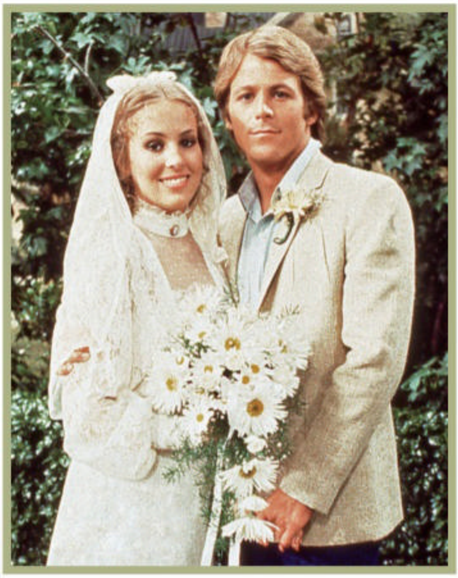
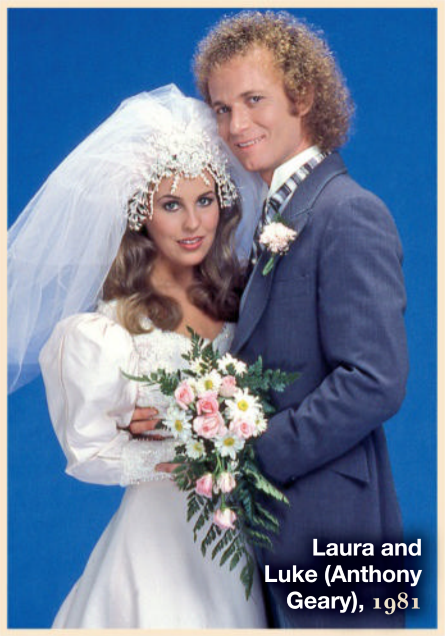


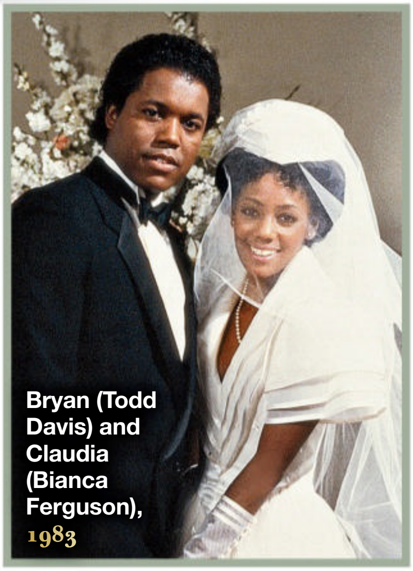
Laura (Genie Francis) and Scott (Kin Shriner), 1979

ABC



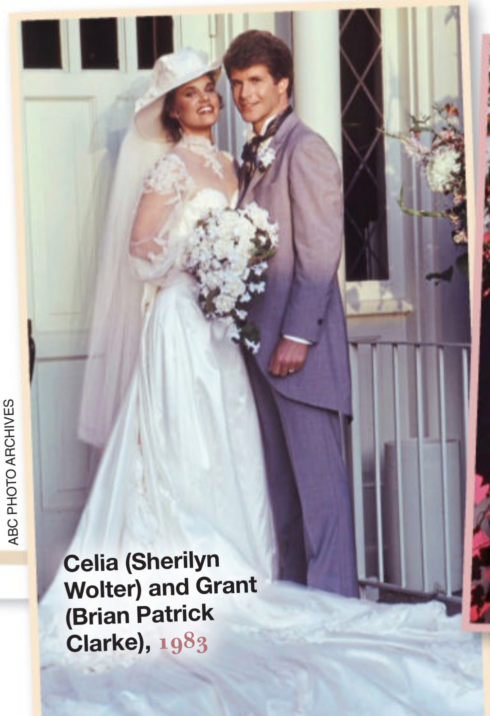
Laura and Luke (Anthony Geary), 1981

BOB D'AMICO/ABC



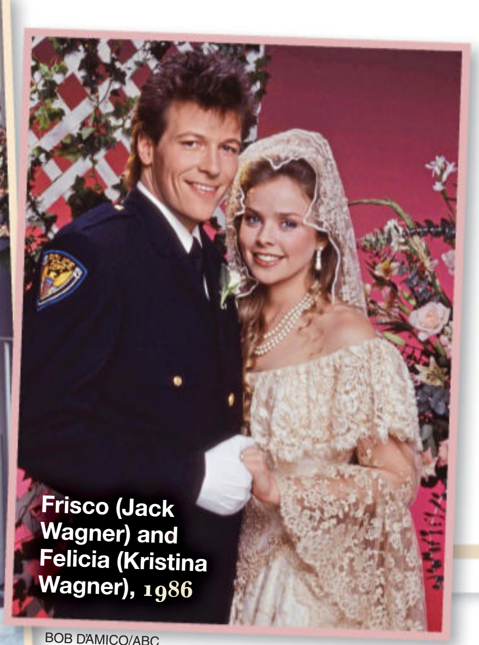
Bryan (Todd Davis) and Claudia (Bianca Ferguson), 1983

ABC



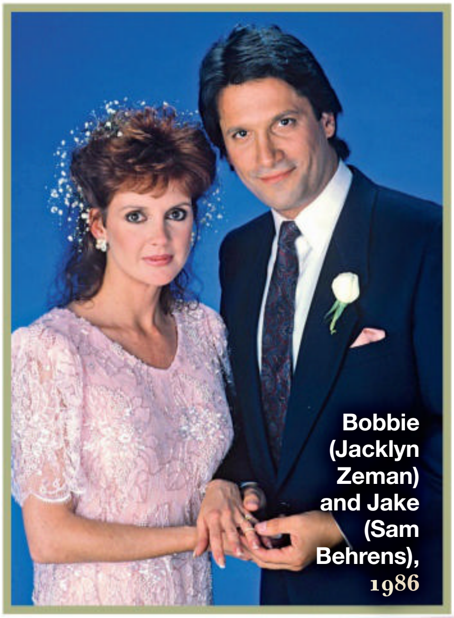
Celia (Sherilyn Wolter) and Grant (Brian Patrick Clarke), 1983

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES



Frisco (Jack Wagner) and Felicia (Kristina Wagner), 1986

BOB D'AMICO/ABC



Bobbie (Jacklyn Zeman) and Jake (Sam Behrens), 1986

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Anna (Finola Hughes) and Duke (Ian Buchanan), 1987

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Simone (Laura Carrington) and Tom (David Wallace), 1988

ABC

Sean (John Reilly) and Tiffany (Sharon Wyatt), 1988

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Dominique (Shell Danielson) and Scott (Kin Shriner), 1993

JIM WARREN

Alan (Stuart Damon) and Lucy (Lynn Herring), 1990

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Anna and Robert (Tristan Rogers), 1991

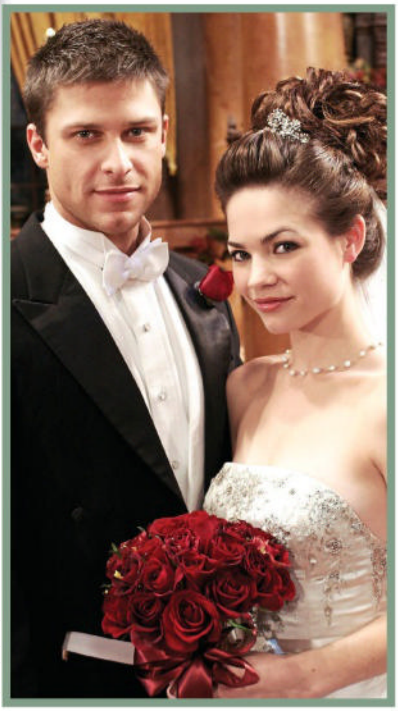
CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

DONNA SVENNEVIK/ABC

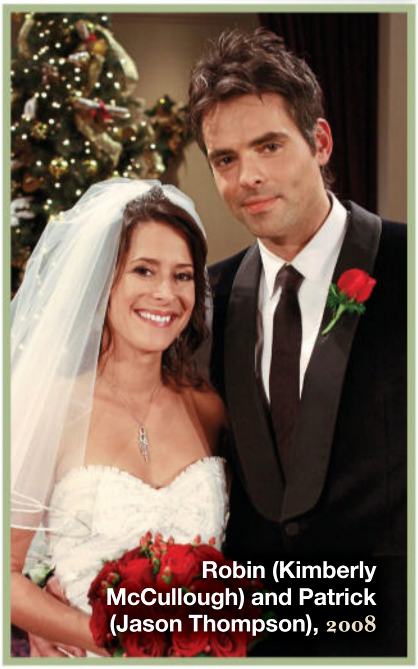
Lois (Rena Sofer) and Ned (Wally Kurth), 1995

SCOTT GARFIELD/ABC

Sonny (Maurice Benard) and Carly (Sarah Brown), 2001

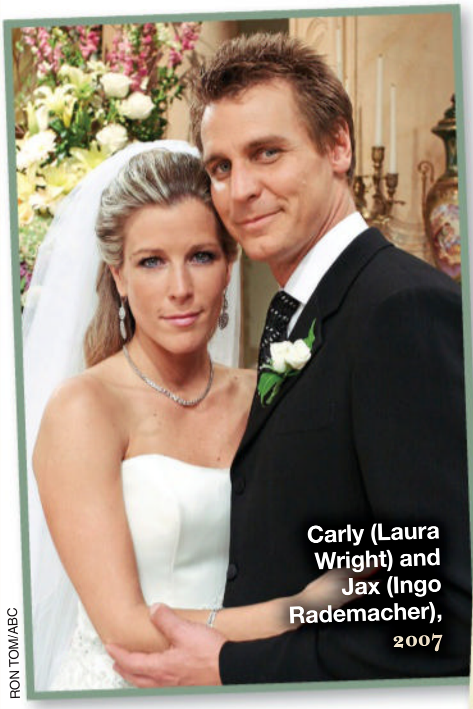

RON TOM/ABC

Lucky (Greg Vaughan) and Elizabeth (Rebecca Herbst), 2005

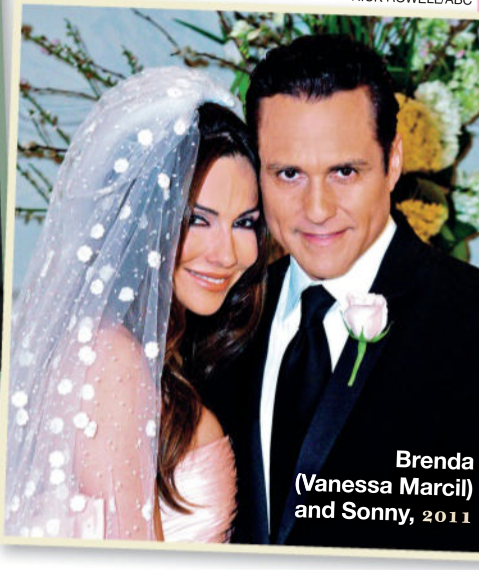

RON TOM/ABC

Robin (Kimberly McCullough) and Patrick (Jason Thompson), 2008

RICK ROWELL/ABC


RON TOM/ABC

Carly (Laura Wright) and Jax (Ingo Rademacher), 2007


Brenda (Vanessa Marcil) and Sonny, 2011

SEAN SMITH/JPI

Luke and Tracy (Jane Elliot), 2010

Dante (Dominic Zamprogna) and Lulu (Julie Marie Berman), 2011

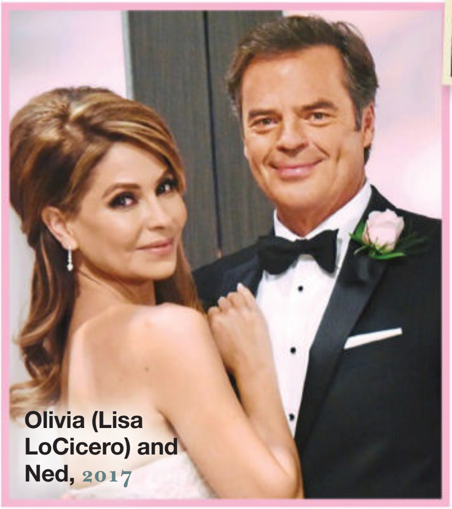
RICK ROWELL/ABC

Julian (William deVry) and Alexis (Nancy Lee Grahn), 2016

HOWARD WISE/JPI

Sam (Kelly Monaco) and "Jason" (Billy Miller), 2016

RICK ROWELL/ABC



Olivia (Lisa LoCicero) and Ned, 2017

XJ JOHNSON/JPI

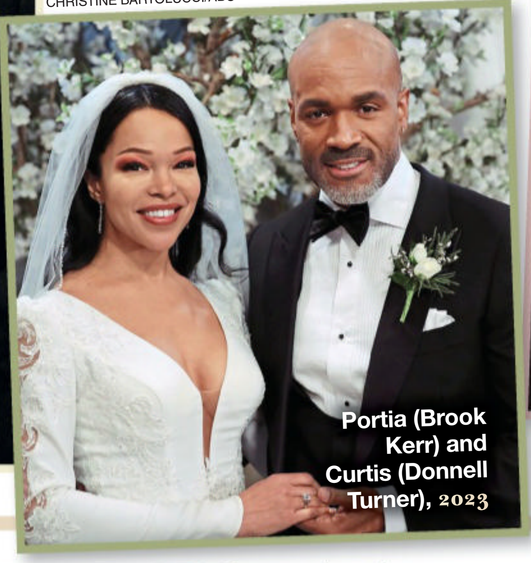
JIM WARREN

Kevin (Jon Lindstrom) and Laura (Genie Francis), 2017

Maxie (Kirsten Storms) and Nathan (Ryan Paevey), 2017

GREG HARBAUGH/ABC

CHRISTINE BARTOLUCCI/ABC



Portia (Brook Kerr) and Curtis (Donnell Turner), 2023

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

More GH cast members share their stories.

PHOTOS: CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

LEXI AINSWORTH

(Kristina Corinthos-Davis, 2009-11, 2015-17, 2018-present)

What stands out about getting the job? "I was 16; I remember that because the day I found out that I booked the show was the same day that I got my driver's license, so it's a core memory for me. My agent got me the audition. I went in, I did my scenes with [Casting Director] Mark Teschner and then they brought me back for a chemistry read with Steve Burton [ex-Jason]. I remember being really excited but also very nervous; he's the nicest guy, but he can come off somewhat intimidating. But he was great, and I booked it, and the day before my first scenes, they called and said, 'You're fine with, like, shooting in your bra and underwear, right?' I was just thrown into this situation that I didn't realize I was going to be in, but it ended up working out — and I ended up in boxer shorts instead of an actual bra and underwear. They initially didn't offer me a contract; I think they were kind of testing the waters a bit, probably because I was so young and they wanted to make sure that I could handle it."

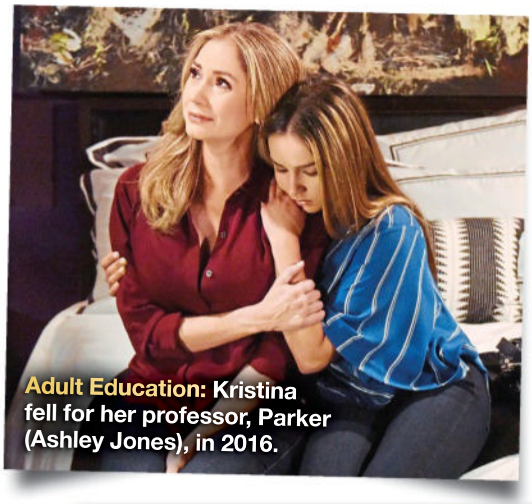
Did you understand the significance of playing Sonny and Alexis's daughter? "Yeah, I remember finding out who I was related to on the show and I did know the significance of that, which made it all the more exciting for me when I booked it because I grew up watching soaps with my grandmother and I knew who Sonny and Alexis were. They are both such strong, central characters and I'm so lucky to work with both of them. And I think it's great to see a strong female like Nancy's [Lee Grahn, Alexis] character raising strong women."

You were given dramatic material to play very early, with Kristina's abusive relationship with Kiefer. "That particular storyline meant a lot to me because of the importance of telling it and making it as real as possible. I remember I did my own stunts for that, not that they were so crazy, but we had a stunt double on set and I said, 'If I can do these myself, it would help me so much as an actor to get to that place mentally.' I came home with, like, rug burns on my knees."

You won your Emmy for the story that saw Kristina exploring her sexuality and getting together with Parker. "I'm honestly really impressed with how well that was received. I know not everyone was on board with that, but I was so happy to see how many people supported it. Like the domestic violence story, that was an important one to tell."

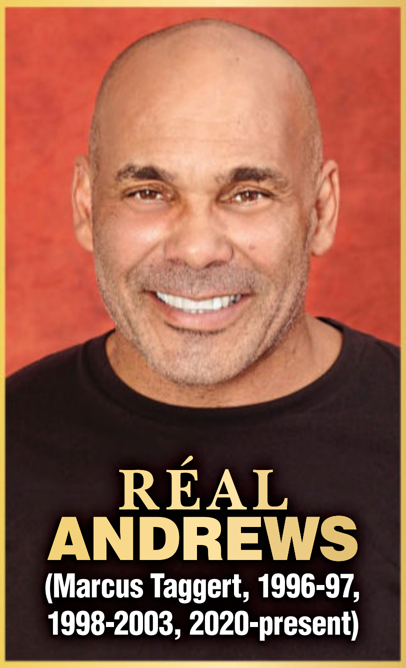
What was your reaction when you found out Kristina was going to get involved in a sex cult? "That one took me by surprise, for sure! I think it was very bold of them and I could see how Kristina was in a vulnerable position and ended up in that situation."

What does the milestone of the 60th mean to you? "It's huge to be a part of this big GH family. It feels like my second home. I've practically grown up on the show; it's unlike any other medium. It's been a significant part of my life and I can't imagine where I'd be without the show."



Adult Education: Kristina fell for her professor, Parker (Ashley Jones), in 2016.

XJ JOHNSON/JPI



JIM WARREN

RÉAL ANDREWS

(Marcus Taggert, 1996-97, 1998-2003, 2020-present)

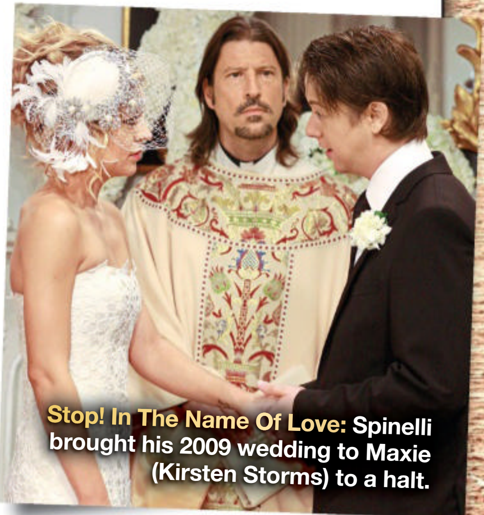
BRADFORD ANDERSON

(Damian Spinelli, 2006-13, 2014-present/on GH: NIGHT SHIFT, 2007)

What stands out to you about your introduction to GH? "I had been in L.A. for about a year and had done a few episodes of VERONICA MARS, and I turned down an audition for a play in San Diego because I was like, 'No, I've got to stay in L.A. and try [to book something].' Two weeks later, I booked GH. I couldn't believe a character like this was going to be on a soap! But at the same time, I didn't really know anything about soaps. I remember sitting in my one-bedroom apartment, trying to figure out what kind of voice this guy would have. Anyway, when I got it, I was like, 'Wow, this could be for three months? That's unheard of! That's amazing! I know I'll be eating for at least three months!' My first scenes were with Ted King [then-Lorenzo]. We rehearsed and I put my feet up on the table and said, 'I'm the Jackal.' It was the next few episodes I had, which were with Steve [Burton, ex-Jason] and Kelly [Monaco, Sam], where I was like, 'Holy crap, this is the amount of material we can do in a day? And it can be creative?!' When I worked with Steve, I was like, 'Man, I feel good about this.' That whole first year was going from introduction to introduction — 'Okay, now it's time for Sonny to meet Spinelli, now it's time for Alexis to meet Spinelli, now it's time for Luke to meet Spinelli' — and each character getting their moment of reacting to me. It was such a cool way to meet everybody."

Spinelli's dynamics with Jason and Maxie really grounded him on the canvas. "For sure. I give Steve a lot of credit because it would have been so easy for him to be like, 'Oh, man, this stuff is so stupid.' Like, 'What are we doing?' Who knows, maybe other people in daytime would have, but if he had had that reaction, I wouldn't be talking to you today — it would have died. And I knew immediately with Kirsten [Storms, Maxie] that she had her own energy, and her energy puzzled Spinelli. Maxie took up just as much space as him and that's what made it interesting. They both talk a *lot*. What was fun with Steve is that Spinelli would talk for two pages and then Jason would be like, 'Yep,' or whatever, right? But it was the inverse with Maxie — Maxie would talk for two pages and Spinelli would have to process it. Working with the two of them together was always fun because they each have their own comedic energy and I was able to just float between them."

There aren't many characters like Spinelli in the daytime universe — certainly not ones with his longevity and popularity. What does it mean to you to have become a fan favorite? "What I identified about my character pretty soon after I started is that he's an outsider. He said that, that he felt like he didn't belong. And I kind of felt that about myself in a way: 'I'm not sure I belong here, but I'm going to do my best to serve the story and serve this character.' Spinelli is a character I think everyone can relate to because he's an outsider, and that story of trying to figure out where you belong, and if you belong, and seeing someone find their friends and their sense of belonging, I think that is so easy to root for. I could very clearly feel that people were rooting for me, and that was really cool, and the audience and my fellow actors appreciating the work that I did and I do means a lot. I never imagined being a card-carrying member of the daytime community but it has been very special to me."



RON TOM/ABC

Stop! In The Name Of Love: Spinelli brought his 2009 wedding to Maxie (Kirsten Storms) to a halt.

What stands out to you when you look back on landing the role? "If we go back to day one, Detective Taggert was an under-five. I grew up watching GENERAL HOSPITAL so I was honored to get the chance to be on the show, but literally all my words were, 'I'm Detective Taggert with the PCPD.' That's it! As an actor, those smaller parts are some of the hardest parts to do because you don't want to screw up, you're practicing these stupid five words a million different ways. I'll never forget coming down the long hall toward the dressing rooms and I saw Maurice [Benard] — Sonny! He was Sonny to me and I was a mush. I went to shake his hand and he brushed right by my hand and went into a hug. It was instant with us. He was the best man at my wedding; we have an unbelievable bond. Going back to the scene, apparently the story is that there had been several people they'd put across from Maurice, but there never was the fire and the chemistry [that they were looking for]. And in those five words, there was such chemistry between the two of us that they immediately called my agent and offered us a contract. And that was the beginning of Taggert. Within hours of my first show airing, I was at Vons [supermarket] and people were like, 'Taggert!' It was amazing."

You got a promotion to contract player and Taggert got a promotion of his own. "I'll never forget, I'm in my apartment with my script where Taggert gets the promotion to lieutenant. A.J. Quartermaine comes up to me and says, 'Congratulations on your promotion, Detective.' There was a fun thing that went on forever where everybody would call me 'Detective" and I'd say, 'It's Lieutenant, I got a promotion.' But anyway, I called my mom and said, 'I got a promotion, I'm a lieutenant!' She goes, 'You're acting.' But I was so excited in the moment, you know?"

What did it feel like to be asked back to the show in 2020? "Now you're getting me emotional. I'm 60 and we're celebrating 60 years of GENERAL HOSPITAL; I'm as old as the show and I started 28 years ago. I'm not that person who looks back and says, 'I regret that,' or, 'I shouldn't have done that,' but I regret some stupid decisions I made as a younger [man] and there wasn't a day that went by, honestly, for 17 years where I wasn't like, 'I wish I could go back.' I will never forget the day. I was in the kitchen and a text came through from [Casting Director] Mark Teschner and I literally fell to my knees. I was just grateful to God for giving me another chance. I was grateful to Frank [Valentini, executive producer], grateful to the writers, because I knew why Mark was texting me. When I called him back, he said, 'Hey, listen, we'd like you to come back. Would you be interested?' I said, 'Would I ever!' It was the greatest day of my life. I was on top of the world."

What does it mean to you to be part of GH's 60th anniversary celebration? "It's such an honor and a privilege to be part of a show like this. It's a legacy and it's still continuing. I practice gratitude every single day and at the top of the list is Frank, the writers, the actors. I'm grateful for every second, every moment, the friendships I've made. I love going to work every day."

XJ JOHNSON/JPI

Good To Be Back: Genie Francis's Laura welcomed Taggert home in 2020.

KATHLEEN GATI

(Liesl Obrecht, 2012, 2013-present)

LAURA BURKE PHOTOGRAPHY

What most stands out to you about your audition? "In looking at the material and seeing that Dr. Obrecht was a scheming, conniving, snooty Swiss-German head of the psychiatric institute in Switzerland, I got excited about how much fun it would be to play this accented character. So I spent the next few days enthusiastically preparing for the audition, even though it was only for a two-day role. I also remember how kind the casting director, Mark Teschner, was."

What was your first day like? "Working with Tony Geary [ex-Luke] was a dream! He was an absolute sweetheart and very funny. We had so much fun doing our scenes and using accents on each other, he with his Dr. Fon Sheeeemermen and me with my pseudo Swiss-German Dr. Obrecht."

How did you react when they asked you to continue on? "I was working on ARROW in Vancouver when I received a call from the casting department saying that they would like to bring me back and give me a daughter. I still remember that emotional moment of getting this news. I was thrilled to be invited back, and in addition, as I don't have any of my own children, getting to be a mother to a daughter meant a lot to me. I was filled with love and joy! Little did I know that in my first encounter with my daughter, Britta, I would have to slap her in the face!"

Do you have a favorite storyline or scene? "There have been so many favorite storylines, brilliant actors to work with, and material that is sheer joy to perform. But I have to say that with my musical theater singing and dance background, getting to sing and dance over the years has been the highlight, in particular the Nurses' Ball where Obrecht steals the stage with her rendition of '*Willkommen*' from *Cabaret*, with eight amazing Broadway dancers! What a thrill!"

What about a favorite line of dialogue? "There are so many wonderful lines, but a few have really stuck with me! It all started with the wonderful comment to Lucy Coe: 'You don't have to be insane to be evil, you can simply be evil.' How Obrechtian is that! Or after shooting Elizabeth Webber in the shoulder, a few months later I ask her, 'Nurse Webber, how is zee wing?' Brilliant! Then the great line when Faison says to me, 'Do me a favor?' And I say to him, 'Zee clamps?' I try to keep a straight face as we usually only get one take, but I think I had to do that line a few times as I laughed so hard!"

What does it mean to you to have become an important part of this iconic show? "It is an honor to be part of such an iconic show. It isn't every day that a show lasts this long, and so many amazing actors have passed through these doors onto the soundstage, entertaining the audience generation after generation. I am privileged to be one of them."

Britta Filter: In 2013, Obrecht was revealed to be Britt's (Kelly Thiebaud) mother.

RICK ROWELL/ABC

LISA LOCICERO

(Olivia Quartermaine, 2008-present)

PHOTOS: CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

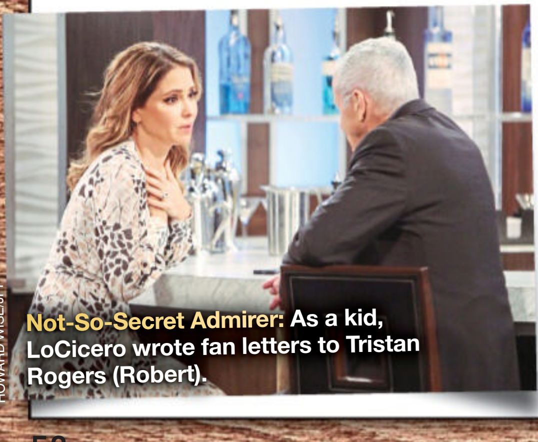
You grew up watching the show. What are your earliest memories of it? "It was the high point of my day. It's no exaggeration to say that GENERAL HOSPITAL was formative to me as a young child and the person I became as an adult. I started watching the show with my grandma as she was doing needlepoint, smoking cigarettes, and drinking Tab out of a can with a straw, and she's still alive, about to turn 100 years old! The show was like my own personal mythology, and it's almost like I shot karmic arrows out into my future, that it was sort of destined to me to wind up being on it."

What other roles had you gone out for before Olivia? "First, I didn't get Lois [in 2004], and then I read for the Kate/Connie role. I walked out of that audition going, 'Well, I nailed that.' And I got back from my agent, 'They have something better for you down the road.' I thought, 'Oh, *please*.' I was so bummed; I thought they were just blowing smoke. But they weren't! They kept their word."

You've gotten to live out so many GH fan wish-list items: Get injected with LSD by Heather Webber, have a baby with Sonny... "Hold the phone — I am not just *among* the women to have had a baby with Sonny, I'm the first to make a baby with Sonny! Well, that we know of [*laughs*]. Let's be honest, about 30 more diminutive brunettes with big boobs could come out of the woodwork and say, '*I* had your baby first!' "

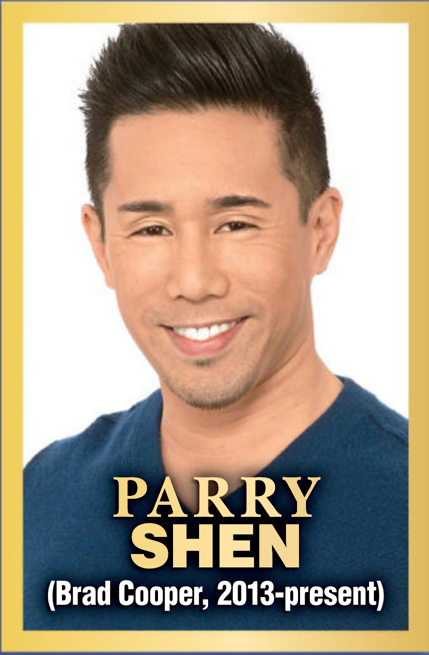
True! And how psyched were you to become a Quartermaine? "Well, I think we can all agree that the Luke/Laura marriage is sort of the cultural pinnacle of the show, and like everybody else, I stopped my life and was glued to the television for that wedding. If you had told me at that time that later in my life, I was going to be walking down the aisle and Genie Francis [Laura] was going to be standing there, watching with tears in her eyes, I truly would have been willing to skip all the intervening years and say, 'You know what? I don't need to go to prom. I don't need to do any of the things that lead up to it, let's just forget all of that and fast-forward to the part where Laura Spencer is at my wedding!' I cried so hard during taping because it was really emotional."

What does it mean to you to have been a part of it for so many years? "It has meant so much to me. I started in my 30s; now I'm in my 50s. It allowed me as a woman, as an actress, to be settled while I raised my son and not constantly seeking employment or running around shooting [different shows]. It has been a wonderful, meaningful job. Sixteen years later, it still hits me; I'll be talking to Genie or working with Tristan Rogers [Robert] and I'm just amazed that I'm here."



Not-So-Secret Admirer: As a kid, LoCicero wrote fan letters to Tristan Rogers (Robert).

HOWARD WISE/JPI



PARRY SHEN

(Brad Cooper, 2013-present)

TODD WAWRYCHUK/ABC

What stands out to you about your first day? My very first line on the show was, 'Excuse me, Dr. Drake...' and I kept saying, 'Excuse me, Dr. Drake Ramoray' — Joey's DAYS OF OUR LIVES character on FRIENDS — when I would rehearse it on my own. I had to prep myself right before [they called], 'Action!' — 'Do not add "Ramoray!" '

How short-term did you think Brad was going to be and what did it mean to you to become a regular player on the show? "The original run was for four episodes, so that was my expectation. I thought, 'Well, he's already established in this world [of the hospital, as a lab tech], so the role could feasibly keep going as long as I bring something different to the table that they don't have.' And for me, that was infusing humor wherever appropriate — or inappropriate! I think that connected with the audience and then it really took off when that humor worked with the Britt character. When I had done about 40 episodes and they wrote me as a descendant of the Wu family from the '80s Asian Quarter storyline, that's when I was like, 'Holy crap! I'm a legacy character!' "

What have been your favorite storylines as Brad? "The Wiley saga was great, to have something meaty and with such high stakes for Brad, losing his husband and child — twice! Obviously, having one of the best friendships in daytime ever with Britt was such an awesome thing to see develop. From them being frenemies, to finding a shared connection through snark at the Nurses' Ball, to seeing them eating/drinking/singing, to their friendship being cut short by The Hook — what an incredible arc to have played out over the course of a decade. But I also love the over-the-top things I've gotten to do, like getting pushed off a parapet — and surviving! — and making the most indecent of indecent proposals to Michael Corinthos. Brad would have gotten *so* canceled back then!"

What does it mean to you to have been part of GH for a decade now? "I'm extremely proud to be a part of such a historic piece in television history but I am also very humbled. I was recently in a party scene with a lot of cast members and I thought, 'Wow, I've been here for almost a decade. Not bad!' Then I looked around and realized I was the newest cast member in the scene by, like, several years! It's still amazing to have been a part of the show for such a long time, but when you zoom out and see Kin Shriner [Scott], Genie Francis [Laura], Jacklyn Zeman [Bobbie], Maurice Benard [Sonny], Laura Wright [Carly], it very quickly makes me realize that I'm just a small cog in all this."

About A Boy: Brad lived to regret the day he agreed to pass off Nelle (Chloe Lanier) and Michael's son as his own.

XJ JOHNSON/JPI

EDEN MCCOY

(Josslyn Jacks, 2015-present)

What do you most remember about landing the job? "This story is special to me to this day. I initially read for Mark [Teschner, casting director] in his office. I was 12 at the time. I remember thinking it went pretty well and then I went in for a callback and after that, I had a producer session in Frank's [Valentini, executive producer] office. I remember thinking it was like something out of *Star Wars*; there was this long table full of producers and Frank was sitting in, like, the king's chair at the end of the table. I did the scene and when I was done, Frank was like, 'Where have *you* been hiding?' I think I got the call the next day or the day after; I was in the car with my mom when I found out. It was my first week of seventh grade and I just remember freaking out in the car. It's fun to think about now because I am so close with all of these people that picturing when everyone was a complete, scary stranger is, like, hilarious."

What stands out about your first day? "It was Sonny and Carly's wedding. I remember fake-playing the flute and we had to redo it a couple of times because there were audio troubles — and I remember Maurice [Benard, Sonny] groaning about it [*cracks up*]. He is literally a teddy bear, but he's scary if you don't know that guy, and I hadn't really met anyone before going up to set. I remember being very nervous to ask Laura [Wright, Carly] for a picture, but I did and she posts it every year on my birthday."

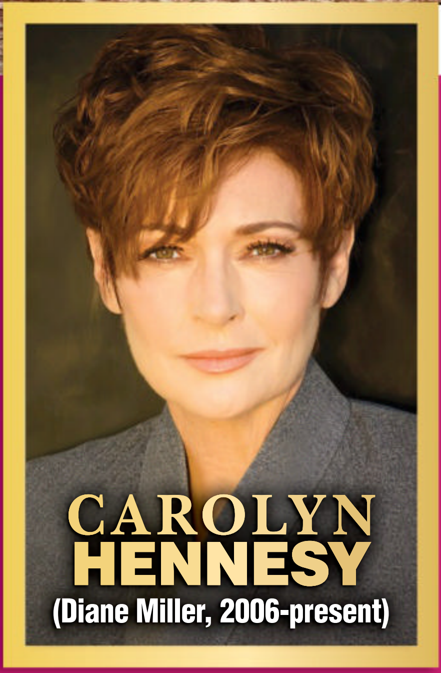
Were you excited when Joss started getting her own storylines? "Oh, for sure. I think the story with Nelle was my first chunk of material that was heavier and I think it showed a little bit more of what I was capable of. When Frank initially told me about the Oscar [cancer] storyline, I was very honored that the writers trusted me with such powerful and serious subject matter. What was amazing about that story was all the guidance and support I had from all of the adults involved, like Laura and Tamara [Braun, ex-Kim]. Laura is a combination of mom and friend and I'm so grateful to have her as a mentor. She's pretty much taught me everything I know and is a person I can trust with anything and everything."

Was it weird when you started having kissing scenes? "Yeah, that can be very awkward, I think mostly for the crew, who is a mixture of older brothers and father figures toward me! It's become an ongoing joke because Josslyn just can't stop having sex at this point!"

What does it mean to you to be part of GH's 60-year legacy? "To stand amongst the legends that have totally paved the way for me and this younger generation of actors is incredible. To be raised on a TV show is such a wild experience in itself, but to be raised on this TV show is very special. I'm nothing but honored. These characters have had such a unique impact on our fans' lives, and for me, personally, to have this, like, digital diary of my childhood is such a cool thing."

Off To A Good Start: Here's McCoy's first episode as Joss, in a scene with Laura Wright (Carly) and Maurice Benard (Sonny).

ABC



SUZETTE TROCHE-STAPP

CAROLYN HENNESY

(Diane Miller, 2006-present)

Had you ever watched GH before being cast? "Yes. My first professional job, ever, was during the Luke and Laura heyday. Marvin Paige was the casting director and he cast me as Dora the photographer's assistant during Laura's Miss Star Eyes campaign. So I was Dora, and I watched the wedding and Luke and Laura being on the run from Port Charles, and then I sort of drifted away from it. And then [Casting Director Mark] Teschner cast me, maybe 25 years ago, as A.J.'s attorney for one day. Then he called me 17 years ago and said, 'Two days of work, are you interested?' And that was for Diane."

What do you think happened in those two days that gave Diane her staying power? "I chained myself to the studio door! I said, 'You're not getting rid of me this time!' No, according to [Script Editor] Elizabeth Korte, there was a moment where Spinelli hugs Diane and she saw my reaction when this wild-haired, strange young man hugged this uptight lawyer and it sparked something within [the writers] to say, 'You know what? Maybe we should explore this character.' There was no character, per se, but she and Bob [Guza, then-head writer] and Jill [Farren Phelps, then-executive producer], we all had the pleasure, together, of creating Diane Miller. I have Maurice [Benard, Sonny] and Steve [Burton, ex-Jason] and Bradford [Anderson, Spinelli] to thank for all of it. Diane is the levity on the show. She's smart and sassy and she knows what to take seriously in Port Charles and what not to, and as far as she's concerned, if it doesn't involve shoes or getting acquittals for her clients, it's really not important."

The Diane/Alexis friendship has been a big part of your life on the show. "The supercouple of Diane and Alexis! You know, you would be surprised at how many women have come up to both Nancy [Lee Grahn, Alexis] and me and said, 'Thank you. Thank you for showing a female friendship that is not based on anything but mutual love and respect, not trying to steal each other's boyfriend, not trying to stab each other in the back. Thank you for that because you're showing us what we can have in our lives.' "

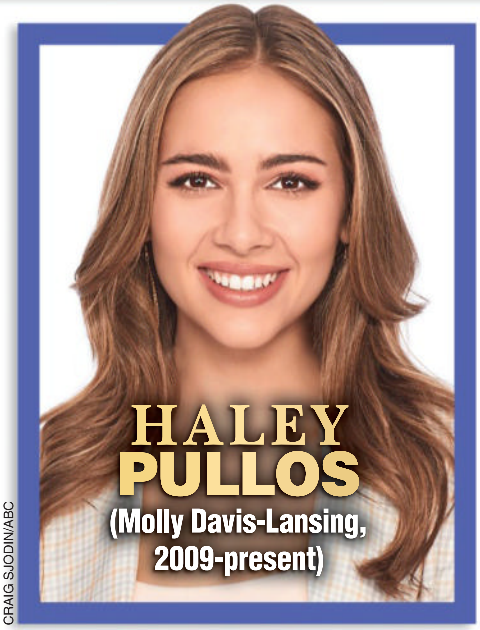
What do you recall about the origins of Diane and Max's relationship? "Again, it was Bob. In the hallway one day he said, 'By the way, I'm giving Diane a love interest and it's Sonny's bodyguard. He's younger than she is.' I went, 'Okay, fantastic!' Because not only is he younger, but he's everything that she isn't and vice versa! He's the brawn of the operation, she's the brains, and the two of them completed each other. When he created Max and Diane, I think he knew, based on our personalities and as actors and as characters, that the audience would love it."

What does it mean to you, in 2023, to still be a vital part of the show? "At my age and having done everything I've done, I am aware of what I bring to the table. Having said that, I am the luckiest girl in the business. Every day I walk in there and it's like it's home, it's family. I am forever grateful to Mark Teschner, Bob Guza, Elizabeth Korte, Jill Farren Phelps, and really, for what he has done for Diane after that team had gone, with the exception of Elizabeth, Frank Valentini [executive producer]. Diane loves Frank Valentini on and off the page; he is one of my personal heroes."

When you think about the show celebrating its 60th, what comes to mind? "That there is a responsibility that this show has lived up to for 60 years to the people that view it. It imparts, ultimately, I think, very good values — the lessons are either, 'Don't let this happen to you' or, 'This is what you want in your life.' It's wonderful to see how the fans have reacted in the 17 years that I've been there and obviously before because the show resonates with them. Yes, it can be wacky, yes, it can be farfetched, but at its core, it is everything right, and I absolutely love it. I am forever grateful to have had this experience."

The Perfect Blendship: Diane and Alexis (Nancy Lee Grahn) forged a lasting bond.

RON TOM/ABC



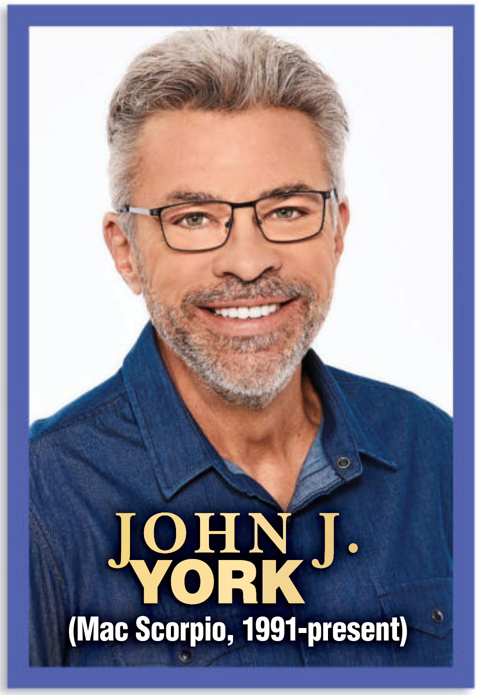
CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

HALEY PULLOS

(Molly Davis-Lansing, 2009-present)

What do you remember most vividly about getting cast? "I only auditioned for GENERAL HOSPITAL one single time. I read alone in a room with [Casting Director] Mark Teschner. A couple of months had gone by and we never heard anything and my parents were kind of getting ready to break the news to me that they wanted to move back to Northern California, which basically meant I would go back to being a regular kid, not having a career. And then my manager called to let us know that I was booked for GH! I was so confused, because there was no callback, I never did a screen test. I thought I would maybe be on the show for three episodes; that was my wishful thinking. But here I am, 15 years later! And I am so beyond thankful for everything GENERAL HOSPITAL has done for me because I literally would not have my career, my dream, if it wasn't for the show."

How do you describe what it was like to grow up on GH? "It is definitely hard to put that into words and only a few people have experienced it. I mean, so many of my memories involve GENERAL HOSPITAL. One of my first crushes ever was on one of my co-workers! It's just been such a huge part of my life for as long as I can remember and growing up there is like having a second family, really. I spent so much time in the early days with the Davis girls, which really helped just become like a true family, and I would not change that for the world. I love Lexi [Ainsworth, Kristina] and Kelly [Monaco, Sam] and Nancy [Lee Grahn, Alexis] as if they were my own blood."



JOHN J. YORK

(Mac Scorpio, 1991-present)

RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC

Tell me your GH casting story. “They had been looking for Mac for a while; as I understand it, they had seen hundreds of guys from Australia to South Africa to different cities in the United States and for some reason, nothing was catching their eye. And somewhere in the back of a file cabinet, they pulled out my 8x10 [headshot], and Mark [Teschner, casting director] held it up and said, ‘If he can do the accent, he’s gonna book the job.’ Mark called me in and I read and he said, ‘Good effort with the Australian accent.’ I thought that meant, ‘Good effort, don’t let the door hit you in the butt on the way out!’ But he gave me a callback and I read for Gloria [Monty, then-executive producer] and she said, ‘Very good,’ and that was it.”

What stands out to you about your early years on the show? “I was nervous coming onto the show because I wanted to do a good job. I just had so much fun working with Tristan Rogers [Robert] and John Reilly [ex-Sean], these amazing veteran actors who made me feel so comfortable. I could sense that people were liking Mac and Robert together, and I was very happy about that. When Gloria left and Wendy [Riche] came in [as EP], Claire [Labine, then-head writer] was writing a lot for Mac and Felicia and I felt like they were really giving us a chance. At the beginning, I was kind of a bad guy, this supposedly edgy guy, and I think they were like, ‘He’s really not that guy. He’s kind of a nice guy.’ And they started to write me that way and I liked it; I like being the white hat.”

What has it been like to be TV-married to Kristina Wagner (Felicia) for all these years? “She’s just been amazing. I remember in the early days, we would run our lines a lot, and every once in a while, Kristina would say, ‘You know, I don’t think you’re reading that line [right],’ and she’d give me a different take on it that was like a lightbulb — no, more like a 1,000-watt spotlight — shining in that just changed the scene for me. It was beautiful. People talk about Hollywood magic; that’s the kind of magic that I’ve been able to experience with her. I feel so lucky, very blessed, to have been given the gift of Kristina Wagner over the years.”

And how do you rate Tristan as a TV brother? “Love Tristan, love working with him. He’s a hoot. I love when people say, ‘The Scorpio brothers.’ I’m like, ‘I’m one of them? I’m a Scorpio brother?!’ I can’t believe it! Thirty-two years later, I still can’t believe it.”

The show is turning 60 and you’ve been there for over half of it. What does that mean to you? “Don’t make me cry ... Too late! It’s an emotional thing, really. It’s been my life. My daughter, Schuyler, was a baby when I was given the gift of GENERAL HOSPITAL, and now here we are, I have three amazing grandchildren and 32 years of everything life has to offer — the ups and downs, the joys, the challenges. It means everything to me and I can’t tell you how much I appreciate the embrace that the fans have taken toward Mac. I’m so blessed and so thankful.”

Forever Your Girl: Mac and Felicia (Kristina Wagner), pictured in 2013, are currently the show’s longest-running marrieds.

RON TOM/ABC

Short And Sweet: Pullos, pictured in 2009, has since eclipsed TV sis Kelly Monaco (Sam) in height.

RON TOM/ABC

Were there any hard feelings the day you became the tallest Davis girl? “Oh, my gosh, *I’m* still not over it! It’s very weird being the tallest one of a soap family because people will message me on social media and they’re like, ‘You’re so tall, how tall are you, 5’10”?’ And I’m 5’3”!”

What was it like for you when Molly started getting kissing scenes? “Frank [Valentini, executive producer] was always so cautious about those kinds of things and would call my mom to say, ‘Judy, I just want to let you know that Haley might have some scenes that involve kissing.’ I just thought it was so sweet that he would check in with my family like that. One of my most prominent memories is that I had asked my mother to wait downstairs in the dressing room area when I had one of my first kissing scenes ever because I didn’t want her watching on set. She promised she wouldn’t come up there, and when the time came, I finished my first kissing scene and I looked over and my mom was standing right there, giggling!”

Do you like playing current-day Molly in lawyer mode? “I love it! It’s so different from anything else I’ve ever done and it’s a challenge because there’s a lot of, like, legal jargon that’s just not in my daily vernacular. I think it’s so fun.”

What does GH’s 60th anniversary mean to you? “It’s so monumental and this huge milestone anniversary makes me sit back and take it in and realize, ‘Wow, I’ve been here 15 years out of the 60!’ I mean, that’s pretty crazy! I am so grateful and lucky to be part of a project that has touched so many people. No matter who you talk to, everyone has heard of GENERAL HOSPITAL.”

HOWARD WISE/PEACOCK

STEVE Burton

(Jason Morgan, 1991-2012, 2017-21)

An on-screen car crash changed the trajectory of Steve Burton's GH run and Port Charles was never the same.

What do you remember about your early days on the show? "The early days were awesome. It was so fun to come on as a Quartermaine. Everybody was so welcoming, it really was like a big, dysfunctional family, but it wasn't *as* dysfunctional as the Quartermaines. So Stuart [Damon, ex-Alan] and Leslie [Charleson, Monica] were everything to me, Anna Lee [ex-Lila] was awesome. At the time, it was David Lewis [ex-Edward], and then John Ingle [ex-Edward] came, and Wally [Kurth, Ned] and Jane [Elliot, Tracy] and Gerald [Hopkins, ex-A.J.], and it was so fun to come on in that family and be involved. I had so much fun on all those holiday shows. Kin Shriner [Scott] and I used to go out and play basketball, we'd go to lunch a lot, everybody would hang out a lot more. I don't want to say it was the heyday of soap operas, but the early '90s were pretty good, ABC was awesome, and it was a great time to be on a soap opera."

What stands out about your early non-Quartermaine co-stars? "It was cool because we were part of the teen story. It was Cari Shayne [ex-Karen] and Vanessa [Marcil, ex-Brenda] and Antonio [Sabato, Jr., ex-Jagger] and it was so much fun to be a part of that teen story, and that was pretty big because that was Antonio's big break. So I felt that there were a lot of eyes watching that summer story. And I worked with Senait [Ashenafi, ex-Keesha] and she was awesome, and then, of course, Kimberly McCullough [ex-Robin]."

How did you react when you heard about Jason Morgan and how did you approach this new Jason that you'd be playing? "I think I was in my fourth year and I didn't really have a lot of story; it was, 'Oh, you're going to work a lot in the summer with the kids and then not so much,' and I was just kind of not feeling fulfilled at that time. And that's when Maurice [Benard, Sonny] came on the show, and at that time I didn't really know him that well, and he came up to me on set and he said, 'Hey, man, you did some really good work. You're a very believable actor. What are you gonna do?' And I said, 'I'm thinking about leaving the show.' And he said, 'Well, what's your acting technique?' 'I have no idea; I don't have a technique, man. I took, like, one 16-week acting class.' It was very valuable to me at the time, but I didn't really have a technique on how I broke down a script; I just tried to learn from people I worked with. And he's like, 'Well, I'll work with you.' So that started a lifelong friendship, but when I tell you it was the student and the master at the time it was true, because I was spending so much time with Maurice, and he would help me break down my scripts for Jason Quartermaine before the accident. And it was an acting clinic daily because I would spend so much time with him and he taught me for so long. It's so funny because he's a real Method actor, so it was always, 'You gotta go deeper, you gotta go deeper.' I remember I had a scene with Senait, and Jason and Keesha were at dinner, and Francesca James [then-producer] came out and she goes, 'Steve, what the hell are you doing? Why are you playing like you're at a funeral? This is dinner with your girlfriend.' I said, 'Maurice keeps telling me to go deep, I gotta go deeper.' And she said, 'No, for this scene you don't have to.' So he and I started working together, and I think people saw me improving and I think it was [Script Editor] Elizabeth Korte's idea — she might have brought it up — and the seed was planted for this character change. And then they're like, 'Wow, you and Maurice work well together; let's put you guys together and see what happens.' And then I spent almost every waking hour with him for years. So that was a big change for me in my life, personally and professionally. He was so generous that I wouldn't be where I am today if we didn't have that meeting on the stage, and he said that to me."

You won a Daytime Emmy in 1998. What do you remember about that night? "Not a lot! It was a whirlwind. I remember getting up there, and all I remember when I won my Emmy for YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS [as Dylan in 2017] was, 'Don't talk as fast this time,' because I felt like I was a speed talker, an auctioneer up there, I was so nervous. The Emmys were in New York and it was a magical time. It was just an amazing night. The fans were on the streets, the fans were in the audience, and just to feel the electricity was amazing."

Jason was also known for his wardrobe. What is the origin of the black T-shirt? "They would try to put me in these lighter shade T-shirts, like gray or beige, and the set would be so hot with the lights, I would sweat and have to literally change my shirt, like, three times a day. And I said, 'Just give me a black T-shirt so I don't have to keep changing.' And that's how it started. 'Perfect. I don't need any other T-shirt. I don't need to change colors.' We weren't trying to be cool at all; it just kind of happened by default."

What comes to mind when you look back on your time on GH? "I'm smiling now because what a blessing to be somewhere for so long. I've made so many great friends. People are like my family there; I grew up on the show. So despite the past and things that have happened, I always look back with fond memories because it was a huge part of my life. It's allowed me to do so much: It's allowed me to travel, it's allowed me to meet so many people. It was an incredible experience and I'll always have love for that place."

Deep Impact: Burton memorably flexed his acting muscles during a date between Jason and Keesha (Senait Ashenafi).

VIVIAN ZINK/ABC

PICTURE PERFECT

Fun photos from shoots through the years.

Maurice Benard (Sonny, l.), Laura Wright (Carly) and Steve Burton (ex-Jason) were in on the joke.

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

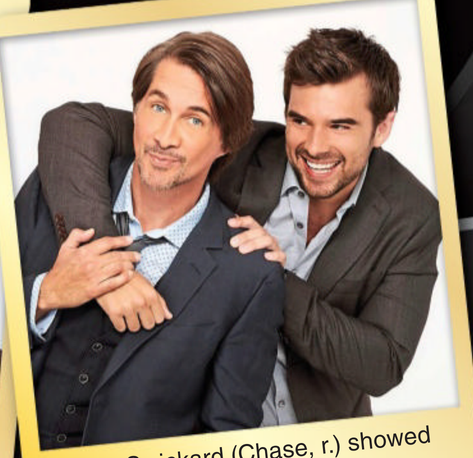
Easton Rocket Sweda (Leo, l.) and Wally Kurth (Ned) struck a similar pose.

Finola Hughes (Anna) raised a glass.

ABC

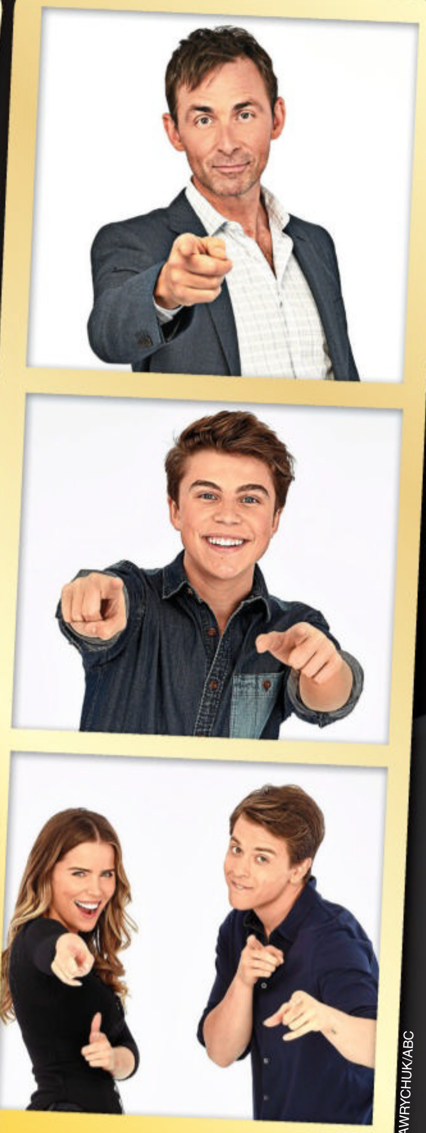
Tajh Bellow (TJ, l.) and Robert Gossett (Marshall) shared a laugh.

RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC



Josh Swickard (Chase, r.) showed Michael Easton (Finn) some brotherly love.

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

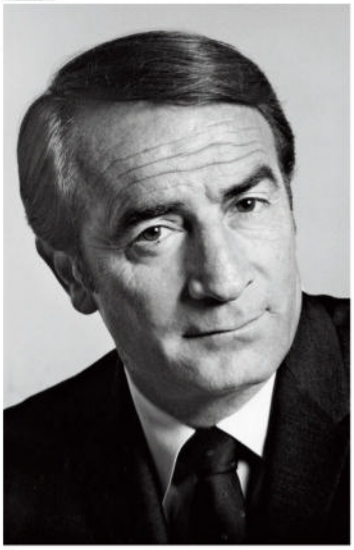


James Patrick Stuart (Valentin, top), William Lipton (Cameron, middle), Sofia Mattsson (Sasha) and Chad Duell (Michael) all made their points.

PHOTOS: TODD WAWRYCHUK/ABC

IN Memoriam

Stars Pay Tribute To The Show's Late Legends



ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

John Beradino, 1917-96

(STEVE HARDY, 1963-96)

"John was always so kind. I remember going to his dressing room and he gave me a signed picture of him from when he won the World Series with the Cleveland Indians. I didn't really know him *that* well, but I remember when he passed away, it really affected me. He meant so much to the show." ***— Jonathan Jackson (ex-Lucky)***

"John was really an amazing guy. He had done a lot of things and seen a lot of things; I think he'd seen some pretty serious combat [during World War II]. But we were sitting in his dressing room one day, talking, and I noticed a ring on his finger. I said, 'John, is that a World Series ring?' 'Oh, yeah, I got it when I played with the Cleveland Indians.' I was like, 'You played with the Cleveland Indians?!' He took it off and let me wear it. We would hang out and talk about books. He always had a paperback book in his hand, and so did I. He loaned me quite a few good ones, and I hope to have loaned him some really good ones, as well." ***— Jon Lindstrom (Kevin/ex-Ryan)***

Rosalind Cash, 1938-95

(MARY MAE WARD, 1994-95)

"She made such an impact that my daughter's middle name is Rosalind. She sort of put a spell on me; there was something just angelic and otherworldly about her. And when she was dying, she was in the hospital and faced it all with such unbelievable wisdom and courage. I'll never forget her." ***— Wally Kurth (Ned)***

"She's the namesake of Rosabel; my daughter's middle name is Rosalind. When Rosalind was dying, I went to go visit her in the hospital and she and her partner kept telling me that she was fine, everything was fine, and I believed them. I was pregnant when they told me she had passed away; they kept most of that from me because they didn't want to hurt the pregnancy, but it broke my heart. I loved that woman with everything I had inside of me. I just adored her. Her partner cut her beautiful dreadlocks before he cremated her and he gave me a bag full of them. I still have them and they're very special to me." ***— Rena Sofer (ex-Lois)***

PHOTOS: CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

JIM WARREN

Susan Brown, 1932-2018

(GAIL BALDWIN, 1977-85; 1992-2004)

"Susan was the person who befriended me in the beginning, when no one else really did. She was gracious and kind and she helped me, giving me little pointers. We became good friends." ***— Leslie Charleson (Monica)***

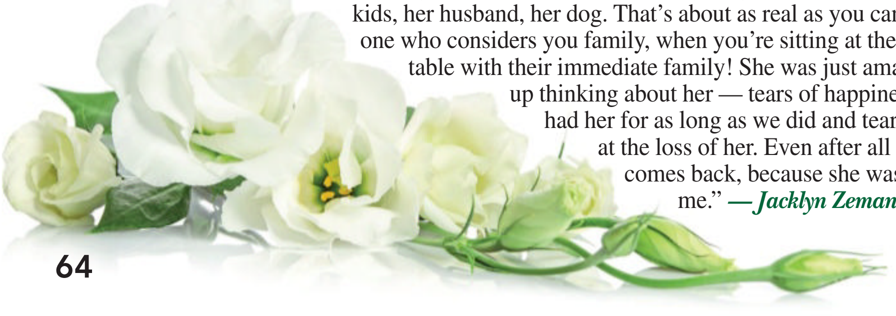
"I lost both my parents in a car accident when I was 15 or 16, so when Susan and Peter [Hansen, ex-Lee] became my father and mother on TV, it just *worked*. Susan helped me build and design my house. There wasn't a weekend I didn't have breakfast with her. She was very much part of my life for 30 years. I got so lucky. There was nobody more fun than Susan." ***— Kin Shriner (Scott)***

Norma Connolly, 1927-98

(RUBY ANDERSON, 1979-98)

"I was there when Norma tested for the role. There were maybe 10 actresses testing, and when she opened her mouth, it was maybe the fifth line of the scene where I went, 'This is Ruby. She's the one.' We were in the middle of the scene; I was thinking, 'They don't even need to see the rest of this, she's getting this part!' That's how incredible she was. But she wasn't just my Aunt Ruby on the show. I had come out to California, I was young and my whole family was back in New Jersey, and Norma would always invite me over for Thanksgiving dinner with her family — her kids, her husband, her dog. That's about as real as you can get with someone who considers you family, when you're sitting at the Thanksgiving table with their immediate family! She was just amazing and I tear up thinking about her — tears of happiness from having had her for as long as we did and tears of sadness at the loss of her. Even after all these years, it comes back, because she was so important to me." ***— Jacklyn Zeman (Bobbie)***

BOB D'AMICO/ABC



Stuart Damon, 1937-2021

(ALAN QUARTERMAINE, 1977-2007, 2011, 2012, 2013)

"He was one of my biggest advocates, and was kind of like the dad on the show. People would go to him; he was the rock. He would always fight for me. He had such a huge impact on me. Stuart was just a solid guy. He did so much for so many people that nobody knew about, and never took credit, never said anything about it, just lived his life. He was just a great example of a man." *— Steve Burton (ex-Jason)*

"We got to know each other because when he [was new to the show], he and his wife and daughter and baby [son] were staying at the Magic Castle Hotel. I would pick him up in the morning and as he once said, 'It doesn't get any better, a blonde in a convertible, picking me up in Hollywood. I've really arrived!' The wonderful thing about our great friendship was that we wanted to help each other out and we both would take criticism from each other because there was respect there." *— Leslie Charleson*

"Stuart and I we were so in sync with how funny it was that Lucy and Alan were having this relationship, that we would get the giggles all the time because he would say, 'Oh, you could be my daughter, but this is so much fun,' and I'd say, 'But you're my Cinderella hero.' He was pure joy to work with because they gave us the best, crazy storyline and he played it to the hilt and he made me laugh. That time with Lucy and the Quartermaines was a gift, a treasure to me. He will always be in my memory as my Prince Charming." *— Lynn Herring (Lucy)*

"Years before I was on the show, I had a female roommate who had grown up watching him in *Cinderella*. I think it might have been my first or second day there that I wound up standing next to him. I said, 'You're Stuart, right? My old roommate still has a crush on you from Prince Charming.' He rolled his eyes and blushed a bit. The cool thing about Stuart is that he absolutely loved his journey in show biz, having grown up in Brooklyn and reaching Broadway. He was full of stories and he was the kind of guy that, no matter how grumpy you might have felt that day, he could remind you how lucky we are and lift your spirits just by stumbling into a conversation with him." *— Jon Lindstrom*

TODD WAWRYCHUK/ABC

Sonya Eddy, 1967-2022

(EPIPHANY JOHNSON, 2006-2022)

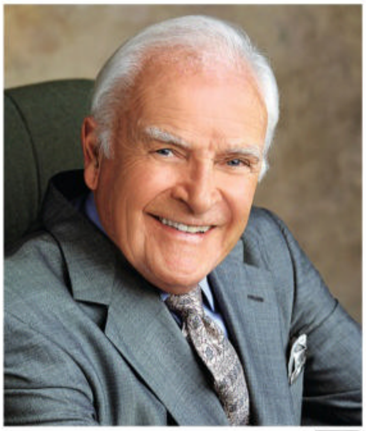
"Sonia was the greatest, just a bundle of love and a wonderful, happy, fun person. She was always ready with a huge hug; she gave the best hugs. It was always a great day when she was on set." *— Finola Hughes (Anna)*

"She had a big laugh, she lived big, she gave big hugs and she had big care for you personally and for the work. She had incredible character. Patrick had a really special relationship with Epiphany, and so much of that had to do with the energy that Sonya brought, the big love that she brought to her work; she just had this way where she could put him in his place when he needed it and lift him up when he needed it. The thing I wish that I could do again is just be in a room with her and just see that big smile and get a big hug and she'd kind of cock her head and ask you, 'Are you good? How are you?' And she meant it. I'm going to miss her." *— Jason Thompson (ex-Patrick; Billy, Y&R)*

John Ingle, 1928-2012

(EDWARD QUARTERMAINE, 1993-2004, 2006-12)

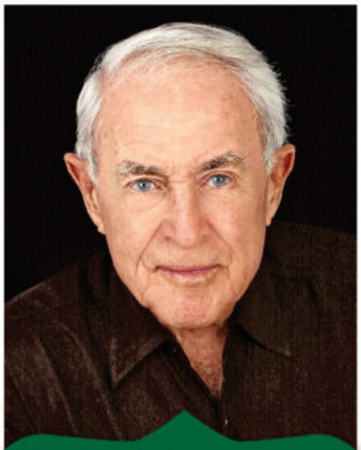
"What a sweet spirit that man had. His presence on set was really incredible and it seemed he was always smiling, positive, expressing gratitude for life and his job. That was really inspiring for me to see at a young age, to see someone who had been through so much and done so much to have just a wonderful humility and gratitude. To be around that kind of energy was such a blessing." *— Jonathan Jackson*



MITCHELL HAASETH/ABC

"He just made going to work a joy. If somebody had a really big monologue or whatever, he would applaud afterward and say, 'Bravo! Bravo!' because he was always a teacher. He was a cheerleader and he was encouraging to everybody. He never closed his door. People were always in there and I would stop to talk. The fact that he always kept the door open was a perfect illustration of who John was: 'My door is always open. I'm here for you. You need me to run lines with you? Let's do it.' " *— Wally Kurth*

"What an incredible and sweet and funny man. He was a renowned acting teacher [at Beverly Hills High] and in real life, he was quite a character. He always had a big hug to give, and a great Hollywood story to tell. I'm so blessed to have known him." *— Natalia Livingston (ex-Emily)*



JIM WARREN

Peter Hansen, 1921-2017

(LEE BALDWIN, 1965-86, 1992-2004)

"Any day that I looked at the script and saw I was working with Peter, I knew it was going to be a good day and a fun day. I knew that we would be meeting at Denny's for breakfast, I knew that we would be going to lunch, I knew we might get stuck doing our scenes at the end of the day and he'd be complaining about wanting to go home and have his cocktail. The last time I saw Peter, he was at his spot that he and his cronies would go to. I would stop by even when he was in his 90s. He'd say, 'Kin, come over here, this is Judge So-And-So,' and he'd say, 'This is the kid who played my son for all those years. Wonderful actor.' I'd say, 'Oh, thank you, Peter.' He was so vibrant, so much fun to be around." *— Kin Shriner*

Shell Kepler, 1958-2008

(AMY VINING, 1979-2002)

"Shell and I were also good friends. She was astonishing in her creativeness, her go-getterness, her business sense." *— Leslie Charleson*

"Shell was magic with innuendos and sarcasm and the eye roll. I knew she brought it every time with her depiction of how she felt about Lucy, I could feed off her in every single scene. She was so professional and so good at making very specific choices for Amy. She was so good at what she did that I think people overlooked how good she was." *— Lynn Herring*

"Shell had the dressing room next door to mine in the old Gower Studios, and together we occasionally misused the fire extinguisher for nefarious purposes on people who shall remain anonymous." *— Brad Maule (ex-Tony)*

ERIC HEIN/ABC

Anna Lee, 1913-2004

(LILA QUARTERMAINE, 1978-2003)

"She was the sweetest lady ever. She had two different wheelchairs, one at home and one at work, and sometimes she would kind of forget how to operate it at work and Craig McManus, the stage manager that's been there forever, would always have to make an announcement like, 'Anna Lee is coming to set,' because she would bump into furniture and one time, she almost took out Leslie Charleson [Monica] for real. But she was just such a sweet lady, and you just you wanted her to be your grandma." *— Steve Burton*

"We bonded over being British and would often share a cup of tea together. When she was in her wheelchair, I would just sit at her feet and talk with her and she was just so sweet and so lovely. But with all those very British women who are lovely, we also have this sly sense of humor and there was always a little twinkle with her." *— Finola Hughes*

"Anna Lee was truly an angel. Ask anyone who ever met her and they will say the same." *— Sean Kanan (ex-A.J.)*

David Lewis, 1916-2000

(EDWARD QUARTERMAINE, 1978-89, 1991-93)

"What was funny about David Lewis was that when I first started the show, he didn't want to do the show anymore, so he was just off stage and he would speak into the boom [mic] and Anna [Lee, ex-Lila] would speak to his portrait. But then they brought him back on — Gloria [Monty, then-executive producer] really wanted him back — and he put up a good fight, but was like, 'Okay, I'll do it if I have to.' So when he came back, he was all fired up and we had some great scenes. We had some really fun times. David was one of those actors that just made all the actors around him look good." *— Wally Kurth*

"I *loved* David Lewis. His comedy timing was so immaculate and he always used to joke that at least once per episode, in the script, it would say, 'Edward,' and then in brackets, 'visibly shaken'. He signed a poster for me once and wrote, 'David,' and then in brackets, 'visibly shaken'." *— Emma Samms (ex-Holly)*

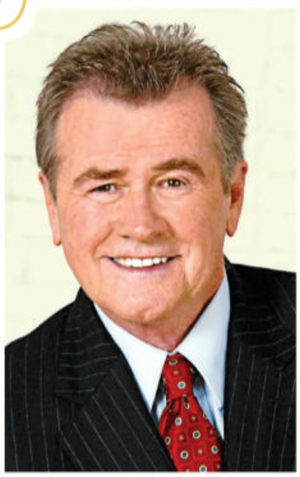
COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Emily McLaughlin, 1930-91

(JESSIE BREWER, 1963-91)

"When I was first on the show, Emily McLaughlin, who was a very nice woman with a cigarette, sat next to me on a plane one day, and when I introduced myself she said, 'Honey, I usually wait till you've been on the show for three years before I learn your name.... That way we both know if you're gonna stick.' We had a really nice time for the rest of the flight." *— Brad Maule*



JOHN PASCHAL/JPI

John Reilly, 1934-2021

(SEAN DONELY, 1984-95)

"He was always a treat. John was my first friend there and the only person I had any social association with, and when he and I would see one another outside the studio, we always had a great time. In fact, there was one time I had my parents here [from Australia] and we had Christmas dinner with him. I was gone from the show when he left, and he was one of the few things I missed at that time." *— Tristan Rogers (Robert)*

"He greeted me the very first day and he had a leather jacket on, which made me realize that I had to instantly go out and buy a leather jacket. He said, 'Hi, welcome to the show. If you need anything, just ask and I'll be there for you all the time, anything you need.' He taught me about professionalism. He really took his job very seriously and he wanted to do well. He was word-perfect and so helpful and just a great person, a lovely family man. He was one of those great people that you have in your life for a short period of time and you will always remember them with great fondness and love." *— Finola Hughes*

JIM WARREN

LYNN Herring

(Lucy Coe, GH, 1986-97, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2012-present; on PORT CHARLES, 1997-2003)

■ ***A six-week role as a mousy librarian-turned-sexpot became a signature run for Lynn Herring.***

How did the role of Lucy come your way? "Y&R was the first soap I tested for. It was for Jill because Brenda Dickson was leaving and it got down to myself and another person and they put me on a hold for Jill and then Brenda came back. Wayne [Northrop, her husband] had been on DAYS OF OUR LIVES [as Roman] for two years or so and I saw how much fun he was having, and how he came home happy every night. He loved being on DAYS and I thought, 'I want that, too.' So when that script came, I thought, 'Okay, I didn't get Jill but I'm gonna go all out,' and I had more fun practicing ripping off the blouse and putting on the lipstick and doing the hair and changing the attitude. And then when I screen-tested, it just worked. There's a feeling you get as an actor when you're not even in your own brain, you're just the character. And I knew when I was done that I got mousy Lucy to the sexy Lucy, and they called the next day and said, 'You have it.' It was a six-week character. And then about four weeks in, they offered me a contract. So it was incredible. It was the most exciting time."

What do you remember about your early days there? "I was so intimidated because I had watched the show. During the lunch hour, I never ate. I lost weight the first couple of weeks because I was so nervous about not getting the blocking, and I would spend the entire lunch hour by myself in the dark with the lights turned off, going over my blocking and making sure I was not going to hold them up or screw up because when you got in the rehearsal room with Gloria [Monty, then-executive producer] and the other actors, it was so embarrassing if she called you out for something you did. So I tried to just fly under the radar. I remember the prop guys and all the camera guys would say, 'You've got this,' because they'd see me sitting there in the dark. They were so sweet trying to cheer me on because they knew how nervous I was."

Who did you connect with in the beginning? "June Lockhart [ex-Maria]. She watched a lot of the scenes and she would come up to me and say, 'Just keep doing what you're doing and don't be nervous.' She was very kind and went to Gloria and said, 'Oh, this girl has it. Just give her a chance.' And then Sam Behrens [ex-Jake] and Jack Wagner [ex-Frisco] and everyone I worked with, they were all so supportive."

How did you react when they put you on contract? "Oh, I screamed. I remember we had this little house and I ran out of the kitchen and I think Wayne was out chopping wood because we still had a wood stove. I just said, 'They want me to stay.' I think they gave me a $500 raise, and I thought I was a billionaire. I felt like all that time I put in was so justified, that they actually liked what I did."

Are there any storylines that stand out to you as favorites? "I think I've been the luckiest person on the show ever. I'm serious. They've included Lucy in so many things. From that first story, the Laurelton murder mystery, we got to go to Nashville and I actually got to go on location as a new person on the show. I got to go to Puerto Rico when Vanessa Marcil [ex-Brenda] and Maurice [Benard, Sonny] had their big love story. I mean, getting to be a gold digger with Alan and wearing the red wedding dress, being part of that amazing B.J.'s heart storyline, and then the drama and all the intrigue and the spying. We hit gold with Scotty and Lucy because they let us run with it and improvise. And when we started doing the Nurses' Ball and got involved in supporting AIDS and HIV projects, that was overwhelming. When that quilt showed up on our stage for one of the early Nurses' Balls and I'm standing there, holding it and sobbing and thinking, 'I get to represent something that's new and on the edge and controversial in the best way possible.' And then even spinning off to PORT CHARLES and today, too, I just think I've had the luckiest character that had the biggest range."

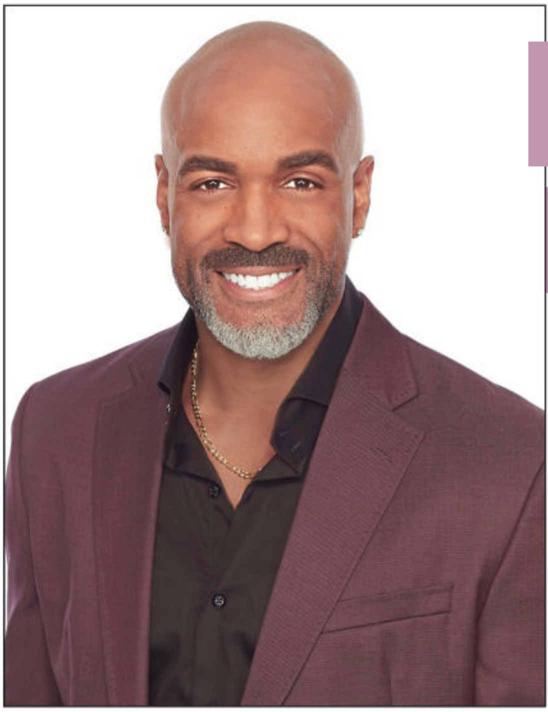
Speaking of PORT CHARLES, how did you feel when you found out that Lucy was getting spun off into a spin-off? "It was scary. I really didn't want to leave GENERAL HOSPITAL. And then when we started doing the pilot and I realized it was going to be true to the characters and they were just going to bring new facets and new elements in, it was so much fun and we were such a troupe. It was more like doing a play because there were fewer cast members. It was a half hour, so we had a shorter day, we had more time to rehearse and they threw a lot of effort into it. I was really proud of what we tried."

What does it mean to you that Lucy is still on the canvas today? "GH has given me everything that I love, and to this day, I'll sit on the stage sometimes and watch the prop guys and grips and lighting and just chat with them. The process of the teamwork of putting something out on the air that goes into people's homes still gets me."

How does it feel to be a part of a 60-year legacy? "Two-thirds of my life have been with GENERAL HOSPITAL. Even when I wasn't on the show, I still kept up with everything that was going on. I can't think of anything else like it that has lasted 60 years. We have provided entertainment for so many generations. It's incredible."

Red Alert: Marrying Alan (Stuart Damon) was a high point in Herring's GH experience.

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC



CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

DONNELL Turner

(Curtis Ashford, 2015-present)

■ ***A boyhood dream came true for Donnell Turner when GH brought him aboard as suave private eye-turned-nightclub-owner Curtis.***

You were a GH fan as a kid. What do you remember most about watching the show? "That I wanted to be Luke Spencer — but you have to understand that the eyes I saw him through were the eyes of a 9-year-old; the illegal parts [of his behavior] were lost on me! The three people who made me want to be an actor are Billy Dee Williams [ex-Toussaint, GH: NIGHT SHIFT], John Ritter and Anthony Geary [ex-Luke]. It looked *fun*, what he was doing on the show. And I learned later that a lot of it was riffing, a lot of it was off script, and though nowadays we're more scripted, I still want to have that same amount of fun, because I'm still like a kid in the baseball card store, looking at my heroes and getting a chance to be a part of it."

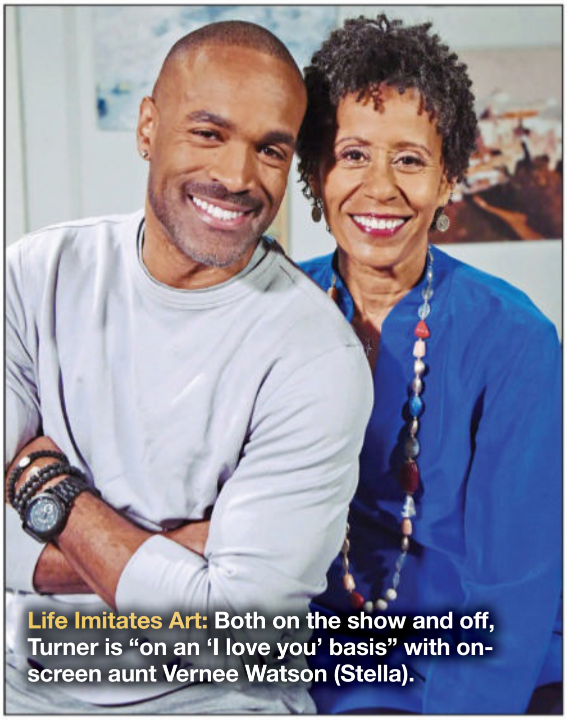
Even if it wasn't Tony Geary-level improv, you did put your own spin on Curtis's dialogue from the very beginning of your run. "When I did my audition with GENERAL HOSPITAL, I changed the lines just a little bit, added a little humor. And when I signed my contract, they told me, 'Use your words, but tell our stories.' So I felt, coming in, that I had a little bit of creative autonomy. They used to write [Curtis saying], 'Hey, let's skedaddle.' I'd think, 'Yeah, picture *me* saying "skedaddle!" ' Curtis would say something like, 'Let's get up outta here,' you know? And I think people resonated with that because it was more real. It's that voice that makes Black people stop me in stores and say thank you, which feels great."

Curtis now has a whole family built around him, one of the few Black families in the history of the show. What does that mean to you, and what is your sense of what it means to viewers? "Well, I imagine it means to them what it means to me when I look at a TV show and I see a nuclear Black family, when I see representation and inclusion. This whole thing means a great deal to me because its absence was, to me, something that was glaring. And I love our head writers, Chris [Van Etten] and Dan [O'Connor], and Frank [Valentini, executive producer], because we had a meeting about more representation. I brought up that there were no nuclear Black families on the show, that there were no Black characters in leadership positions other than Jordan, the police commissioner — and she wasn't solving anything [*laughs*]! I said, 'When I walk up on set and I see all the opulent, fancy homes, I am reminded quickly that none of them are attached to Black people.' They heard me, they listened to me, they made adjustments and my jaw hits the ground now when I see the beautiful house Curtis lives in, the beautiful family he has, the nightclub he owns. I'm so grateful for the way they've written Curtis, the way they've written for Portia, and for the inclusion and the representation, the nonstereotypical representation, because you can write a lot of story without doing stereotypes."

The first new family member GH introduced for Curtis was Vernee Watson's Aunt Stella. What stands out about working with her? "I think there were six women at the audition for Stella, and when every actor left, I ran to the door to open the door for them. Well, Vernee nailed her audition, and when she was done, they said, 'Okay, thank you,' and she turned around and took two steps to the door and before I could even get there, she says, 'I know I'm not gonna open this door by myself!' I mean, I *double-timed* it over to that door! From that moment, it just felt like there was something there; it felt like we'd known each other in a pre-existing way, and to this day, we're still close. We're on an 'I love you' basis and when I lost my mother, she was there for me. We held each other and cried. She is someone special in my life and I thank GENERAL HOSPITAL for bringing her into it."

What have been your favorite storyline moments to play as Curtis? "Well, I had fun when I was a neophyte on the show, playing in graveyards and Dumpsters, but I just love what I'm doing now. I love growing with the show, growing with Curtis. I had a meeting the other day with Frank and I referenced 'our baby, Curtis'. I just enjoy everything about watching our child grow. I love this character, I love everybody at work, I love my co-stars, I love the crew. It's easy to be excited every day when you have so much love for where you are."

What does it mean to you to have made a mark for eight years and counting on a show you loved as a 9-year-old? "It just feels so good because this is home, this is family — it's just this one giant circle that goes back to my childhood, when I probably shouldn't have been even watching a soap! It's amazing to be on the show 40 years later with Genie Francis [Laura] and Tristan Rogers [Robert] and Kin Shriner [Scott] and Kristina Wagner [Felicia] and Finola [Hughes, Anna]. They are legends to me. You know, soaps are a revolving door — many come and many go, so to still be there makes me just feel so grateful to be a part of something so special. And I don't plan on stopping! I just want to express my gratitude to the writers, the producers, to ABC, to Disney — to everyone involved with what they've done with this character."



Life Imitates Art: Both on the show and off, Turner is "on an 'I love you' basis" with on-screen aunt Vernee Watson (Stella).

XJ JOHNSON/JPI

COURTESY OF EMMA SAMMS

EMMA Samms

(Holly Sutton, 1982-85, 1992-93, 2006, 2009, 2012-13, 2015, 2020, 2022, 2023)

Emma Samms shot to soap superstardom — and Holly went from American to British — when she was hired to play a con woman who caught the eye of both Luke and Robert.

How did you come to be cast on GH? "I had been signed by the ABC Talent Development Program. Every year, they would find a dozen or so young performers and try and find them a role within the network. Other alumni from my year of that program were Arsenio Hall, Ronn Moss [ex-Ridge, BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL] and Tawny Kitaen [ex-Lisa, SANTA BARBARA]. So, an interesting mix, as you can see from that cross-section! I was sent along on the audition for Holly, who was an American, and all I knew was, they were still trying to find a love interest for Luke after Laura [in the wake of Genie Francis's exit]. They had tried him with Janine Turner [ex-Laura], with Demi Moore [ex-Jackie], and the audience were having none of it! So, I went in with my little American accent — a slightly dodgy American accent! I did the first audition with [then-Casting Director] Marvin Paige and at the second audition, the callback, I met Gloria [Monty, then-executive producer] and she cottoned on that I was actually, in fact, British, and said, 'Oh, try it again with a British accent.' That audition was the last time Holly was American! I got another callback and did a screen test with Tony Geary [ex-Luke]. They were just looking to see if there was any chemistry and what he thought of me, obviously; he played a big part in the decision, for which I have thanked him multiple times. The next thing I knew, I got the part! And having not watched GENERAL HOSPITAL, I was not as intimidated as I should have been about being a love interest for Luke."

What was your first day like? "My very first day was actually on location, when they put me in that rather green and very cold lake to swim around. I was literally thrown into the deep end!"

What most stands out to you about that first run? "That I was gifted an amazing storyline. Talk about taking something and running with it! They wrote me a whole British family. We went on fantastic locations, they put me in the center of a love triangle, which is the world's best job, really, for an actress! I mean, it was extraordinary, looking back, that I went into that with so little experience. But because Gloria was such a good director as well as a producer and because Tony was so generous and such a kind person to work with, I just sort of got on with it, didn't think twice about the implications of how many people were going to see it, for example. Because it couldn't be seen back in the UK, somehow it still felt quite small, which is absurd! It took me a while to realize, 'Actually, this is huge!' I was just *so* lucky. You know, the genius of Gloria Monty and her writing team is that they went with what worked. They tweaked or sometimes completely rewrote the story based on what the actors were giving them."

A perfect case in point is the Holly/Robert relationship; that pairing was not the plan originally. "Yes, that turned out to be such a success that they turned the story in that direction. I think it started with that beautiful set that they built us, the townhouse, which was enormous. It had a huge main room and then Robert's secret study off to the side, which was very advanced technologically in those days, and on the other side was the kitchen, which is where Holly tried, and failed, to learn how to cook. It was an amazing set and we spent so much time in it that we felt so comfortable in it. The story was fantastic, and working with Tristan [Rogers, Robert] obviously worked well for the audience and was very comfortable for me and him. They added a lot of humor and actually wrote a couple that was happily married and somehow made that interesting, which was unique on a soap. I think all those elements are why people loved it so much."

I think a lot of Robert and Holly fans felt like your 2022 return captured some of that original magic quite well. "Didn't they do a wonderful job with that visit? It really was a throwback to the really good old days of Robert and Holly. It was the closest we've come, I think, to that. Frank [Valentini, executive producer] and his writers did an extraordinary job with the story. I loved every minute of it! It had humor, it had amazing drama, it wasn't overly sentimental. I was over the moon with the last experience that I had there. It's not always gone perfectly, and it didn't go down perfectly with the audience, either; it wasn't just me that was uncomfortable with the things that Holly did. But kudos to the audience for forgiving me and then huge kudos to Frank for reviving what was so great about Robert and Holly."

What does it mean to you that this role you originated over 40 years ago still looms so large in fans' minds and that the show has invited you back again and again? "You know, I would have stayed with this job for as long as they would have had me and never left if it wasn't for the fact that I was offered the job on DYNASTY [as Fallon]. I would never have gone away because that job suited me down to the ground. I loved it. And I don't think I *would* be invited back if the fans didn't embrace me so warmly still. I absolutely give thanks to the audience for their incredible investment in Holly, and Holly and Robert. I am completely surprised by it, but mostly I'm so appreciative. To have been a part of anything for 40 years is amazing and it means the world to me to be part of such a huge behemoth of a show that is still so important to people. It's something that I'm enormously proud of."

The Spy Who Loved Me: Samms has fond memories of the home Holly shared with Tristan Rogers's Robert, including his secret study, which was "very advanced technologically in those days".

ERIK HEIN/ABC

AFF/TA/STEVEN BERGMAN

KIMBERLY McCullough

(Robin Scorpio, 1985-96, 1997, 1998-99, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2005-12, 2013-14, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2018, 2021; on GH: NIGHT SHIFT, 2007-08)

Kimberly McCullough was only seven years old when she beat out contenders including Shiri Appleby to win the role of Robert and Anna's daughter. "I have 33 years of stories to tell," she says about the show that became her second family.

What are your earliest memories of being on set? "My audition, where I met Finola [Hughes, Anna] and Tristan [Rogers, Robert], and I did this improv — I had to get him to eat a peanut butter and jelly sandwich without eating it myself. I remember having to wear a lot of white frilly socks. I was a tomboy, a break dancer, and I wore, like, Nike sweatsuits, so the frilly socks took some getting used to! I remember John Reilly [ex-Sean] and Jack Wagner [ex-Frisco] and Kristina [Wagner, Felicia] joking and laughing, but also working hard and teaching me things along the way. And I always remembered everyone else's lines, and everyone would joke about it: 'Kimberly, what's my line?' "

You kept a swear jar and your co-stars had to pay for every curse word. Who had to cough up the most cash? "Jack! There was like a tier — like, the 'f' word was $10, that was the big one, and 'damn' was probably, like, a quarter. I remember one time Finola was like, 'I have to say f**k right now, no other word will do,' and she had the $10 ready in her hand to put in the jar."

How would you describe what it was like to grow up on GH? "It's all I know, so I have nothing to compare it to. When I was a teenager, I was always trying to have my own identity; I was a little bit aggravated with the fact that Robin and I were synonymous for so long. When I would get recognized while I was out, I was always called Robin. It's just the nature of soap fans that they see you as your character, not as yourself. I think it took time for me to appreciate what that meant, appreciate how I got to grow up alongside Robin."

As Robin matured, so did her storylines. What did it mean to you to be trusted with the Robin/Stone AIDS storyline? "Even while it was happening, I knew it was important. I was sent to acting class specifically for that storyline, which is funny to look back at now. I'm like, 'I didn't need to learn how to act! I already had an Emmy!' But it was nice to have that support, because John Homa, who was our acting coach, served almost more like a counselor because it was so heavy. We were also doing an after-school special, we were doing speeches at AIDS Walks. It wasn't just the storyline, it was a completely immersive experience and something that was happening in the culture in real time. So, it was very overwhelming, but I never once was like, 'Oh, I can't do this.' I wanted to do it, I was excited to do it and I was honored to do it. It almost didn't matter to me how the storyline was received because that wasn't the emphasis from the writers or the producers — it was more like, 'Let's do this right because it needs to be done right.' The sort of surprise and the gift of doing that story was when I would be out in public and people would say things to me like, 'Our family sat down and watched the storyline and my brother has AIDS and now my dad finally talked to him.' That happened all the time, like, 'You helped heal our family.' So, I kind of went from being a kid on a soap opera who would get recognized and kind of roll my eyes to, like, 'Oh, wow. What we do can actually help people, move people and change people's lives.' That was really cool."

Robin and Patrick, also known as "Scrubs", were a hit pairing. What stands out to you about working with Jason Thompson? "It was a perfect combination of a veteran and a rookie coming together. He kept me on my toes and I showed him the ropes. We had natural chemistry; we got along so well and loved each other and still do. With a lot of soap couples, it's so dramatic and the emphasis is on the sexy. We had those sexy, love scene moments, but we were also really flirtatious and gave each other [guff] — there was a sassiness to the relationship that I think was refreshing."

You've known your TV parents, Finola and Tristan, for decades. What do they mean to you? "Oh, I mean, everything. I just called Finola yesterday to ask her for advice. I saw Tristan more than my own dad growing up. To this day, people tell me, 'I can't believe you were a child actor! You're so well-adjusted.' And I definitely give Finola and Tristan a lot of credit for that because they spent a lot of their energy making sure that I was safe and sheltered from any negativity or anything that was age-inappropriate. I am really grateful to them for that because I'm, you know, able to function in the real world [*laughs*]."

What does GH's 60th anniversary mean to you? "I've been in more than half of those 60 years! It's crazy. I have 33 years of memories of GH and I feel really proud to be a part of something that has gone on for 60 years. I'm proud of the history of it, the legacy of it, and how they just keep going!"

Safe Havens: "It's because of them that I didn't have any traumatic experiences on the set," says McCullough of TV parents Tristan Rogers (Robert) and Finola Hughes (Anna), pictured in 1985.

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

JIM WARREN

JONATHAN Jackson

(ex-Lucky Spencer, 1993-99, 2009-11, 2015)

At the ripe old age of 11, Jonathan Jackson landed one of the most high-profile child roles ever cast on GH, that of Luke and Laura's firstborn, which would earn him three Daytime Emmys and a forever place in fans' hearts.

What do you recall about the audition process for Lucky? "Well, it was a process. There were a few auditions, and Mark Teschner, the casting director, I remember feeling his support and encouragement in the process. The screen test was down to just a few people and you're on set under the lights and the cameras are there and I was, you know, just barely 11 years old when this was happening. I remember very distinctly working with Tony [Geary, ex-Luke], doing these scenes a few times, and he looked at me and said, 'They wouldn't be spending this much time with you if they weren't really interested.' That was kind of, I think, his way of giving me a little wink of encouragement and letting me know, 'This is going well.' "

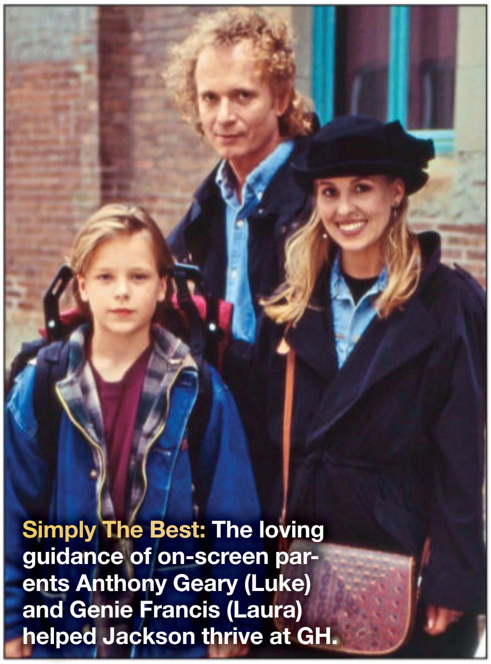
At the time, surely there's no way you could have understood how important Luke and Laura were to the show and how important it was to find just the right actor to play their son. "No. It was sort of an unfolding thing for me because I had no concept of it, but as soon as I started airing, almost everywhere I would go with my family, into restaurants and airports, people were recognizing me: 'That's Luke and Laura's son!' So, pretty quickly, I realized, 'Okay, this means something to a lot to people.' I didn't understand it, but I was at least aware of it. But I will say that ultimately, none of that really mattered very much to me because I was just working day in and day out with Tony and Genie [Francis, Laura]. The best place that a young artist and actor could have been placed was in their sphere and their care. They were just incredible teachers and mentors and examples. They very quickly became just Tony and Genie, my TV parents, people that I grew very, very close to."

What are your warmest backstage memories? "There are so many, but some of my loveliest memories are from when Tony and Genie and myself would have kind of our own little Christmas together in one of their dressing rooms around Christmastime. We would gather and exchange gifts, and that always meant a lot to me. I remember times feeling like I was coming into my own as an actor in their presence. I also remember some of the funny improv moments. Tony was always ad-libbing, and Genie would, as well, so sometimes, even at a young age, I would throw some ad-libs in, and I remember Genie laughing so hard, just enjoying that this 12-year-old was throwing these unexpected moments into the scenes."

What stands out to you about getting a storyline of your own, separate from your on-screen parents, when Lucky and Elizabeth first forged their connection? "That was a significant shift, from nearly everything that I was doing being connected to the family to kind of having a lead storyline separate from that. I didn't really care about that — I wasn't feeling, like, 'Hey, when am I gonna get my own story?' or anything like that. It just naturally happened. You know, the whole journey with GENERAL HOSPITAL was so much learning and growth and experimenting with my craft and that just felt like another step in that direction. I'd never dealt with that theme and that trauma of this girl being raped and having to walk through it with those characters for quite a long time. But it was one of my favorite storylines because of how ultimately beautiful it was. I got so many letters from fans over the years who had been through really traumatic experiences and that storyline somehow gave them a sense of catharsis, I guess. I was always really moved by that, and thankful to kind of be a part of that."

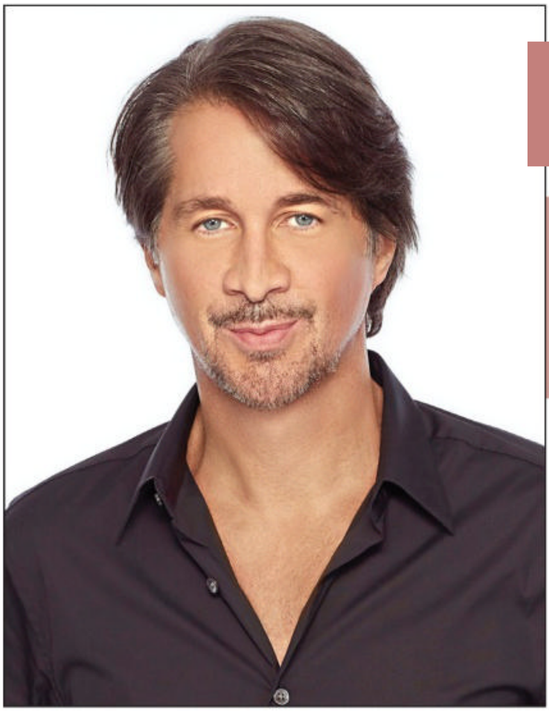
You left in 1999 and returned a decade later. What was that like for you? "It was a unique experience. I just can't really think of any other scenario where that would be possible. To play a character at a very young age through formative years — I think I was around 17 or 18 when I left, and I was 28 when I came back to the show 10 years later and picked up that character. And not only that, but with some of the same actors and much of the same crew. It was a lot of things; it was fascinating, it was challenging, it was moving. We [Jackson and wife Lisa Vultaggio, ex-Hannah] got to reconnect with co-workers that we were close with, but hadn't been in touch with as much over the years, and my children got to reconnect with Steve Burton's [ex-Jason] kids and Becky's [Herbst, Elizabeth] kids. That was really important for their lives and for our lives. And then, from a creative perspective, I got to bring who I was at that point in my life into the character. It was a privilege."

What does it mean to you, as the show is turning 60, to be etched into its history in such a meaningful way? "It makes me feel a bit old, because I remember very distinctly, the 30th anniversary in 1993 and joining a show that had that kind of history. As a young kid, you're not able to comprehend it, but you kind of feel it on an intuitive level, and now, gosh, that it's still going, that it's been 60 years, it's just incredible to go from live, black-and-white television to 2023 with an audience that is still engaged and following the various characters.... This is a difficult industry on many levels for people and especially for young people, and I'm forever grateful that my entrance into it was with the protection and encouragement of everybody there, Tony and Genie in particular."



Simply The Best: The loving guidance of on-screen parents Anthony Geary (Luke) and Genie Francis (Laura) helped Jackson thrive at GH.

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC



CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

MICHAEL Easton

(ex-John McBain, 2012-13; ex-Silas Clay, 2013-15; Hamilton Finn, 2016-present)

In the GH multiverse, Michael Easton holds the record for the most individual characters: two on PORT CHARLES (Stephen and Caleb) and three on GH. "And to think that my high school guidance counselor said I wouldn't amount to much," he quips.

You initially came to the show as McBain, your ONE LIFE TO LIVE role. How did that come about? "When ONE LIFE ended, my wife and I thought, 'Hey, let's make a change and try something new,' so we moved back to California. We were only here a month or so when Frank [Valentini, executive producer] was very kind to call and say, 'Hey, it'd be kind of fun if you came over here for a little while.' And that was over 10 years and three characters ago or something like that!"

What did you enjoy about playing McBain in Port Charles? "I got to interact with Kelly [Monaco, Sam, who had been his love interest on PC] again, which was really lovely. I enjoyed working with Dominic Zamprogna [Dante]. I had never met him before and he's a really good actor. I also remember having fun scenes with Jane Elliot [Tracy] and Tony Geary [Luke], which was such a treat for me, and getting to go on an adventure with Tristan Rogers [Robert]. It was a lot of fun."

You were one of three actors on GH who had to stop playing their ONE LIFE character due to litigation over the rights to them. What was that like for you? "It was so strange. I don't know if anybody's ever had their character traded midseason the way I have — I got traded in the middle of the night by another team and suddenly I'm playing in Charlotte! Yeah, one day, I just got told, 'Hey, by the way, you can't play this anymore, you have to leave.' I didn't think my acting was *that* bad, but apparently, someone got very upset by it and I had to go and they wrapped up my storyline. I had one scene with Finola [Hughes, Anna] and I walked out the door and I thought, 'Well, that can't be the end of it,' but it turned out, that was kind of the end of it! I keep thinking I'd like to revisit that and at least have some kind of closure with it."

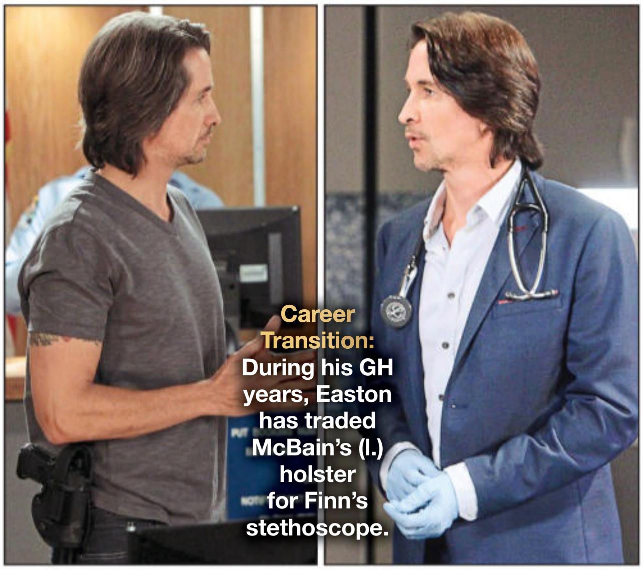
When McBain walked out that door, you returned in the form of Silas Clay, the doctor brother of your PC role, Stephen Clay. What stands out to you about that transition? "It was very challenging. I think that everybody's hand was somewhat forced in that they had to create something new. We all had contracts, you know? It was very difficult. It was the only part I ever did where I had no say in the development of anything, in what it was going to be or how it was going to be played. I tried very hard, but I don't feel like I ever got a good hold on that character. It just wasn't developed well and I didn't do enough with it, I guess. Although apparently, he's quite prolific in having children [Nelle and Willow, who were revealed after Silas's murder to be his biological offspring]. He's had much more of an active life since he's been dead than he did when he was on camera! I mean, how many characters have had two kids after they had a knife in their back and lay on the floor for three episodes?!"

What appealed to you about returning to play Finn? "When I met with the writers at the time, they had such a thought-out character, one I hadn't seen before in daytime. They really kind of hit me with, 'It's going to be like a David E. Kelley character.' And when I heard that, it just opened windows for me. Playing quirky, playing somebody that has social anxiety, somebody that gets embarrassed and embarrasses himself, really took me out of my comfort zone, but it was a really fun challenge and it's kind of what I needed at the time. I certainly had fun those first few episodes, doing a lot of monologues with a bearded dragon [Finn's support animal, Roxy]. Hadn't done *that* before!"

As Finn, you've had two significant pairings, one with Rebecca Budig's Hayden and one with Finola Hughes's Anna. "Rebecca and I had never worked together before, didn't really know each other, but fairly instantly, there was something that sparked. She's really electric and a lot of fun to work with. I was really fond of that storyline. Finola is an amazing actress, and I think [Finn and Anna] got off to a really good start, but then she got handed some heavy material — which was obviously great for her to play and she played it beautifully — that kind of killed the relationship. Really, who's got time for romance if you're trying to figure out if you had a kid with the most evil guy in the universe? That's a much bigger problem than, 'Hey, what do you want to do on Friday night?' "

It's fair to say that the real love of Finn's life is his daughter, Violet. Do you enjoy working with Jophielle Love? "Oh, JoJo is pure magic. She brings joy to every scene she's in."

What does it mean to you to be part of GH as it celebrates its 60th anniversary? "What it makes me think about is the partnership we have with the audience. I think we're sharing this with them because we're only here because of them. Every day, we go in there thinking about them and try to deliver something to them that they can be proud of and enjoy. GH being on 60 years is as much a tribute to them as it is to us. So, I'd like to thank them, because we don't get to do this for 60 years without them."



Career Transition: During his GH years, Easton has traded McBain's (l.) holster for Finn's stethoscope.

RICK ROWELL/ABC; HOWARD WISE/JPI

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

ROGER *Howarth*

(ex-Todd Manning, 2012-13; ex-Franco Baldwin, 2013-21; Austin Gatlin-Holt, 2021-present)

Over his unorthodox stay in Port Charles, Roger Howarth has played a baby-swapping millionaire, a serial killer-turned-art therapist, and a country doctor with Quartermaine blood.

What did you think when Executive Producer Frank Valentini texted you to gauge your interest in bringing ONE LIFE TO LIVE's Todd over to GH? "I was thrilled to be asked. I love the character of Todd and I thought it was a really cool idea to have Todd and Blair and Starr in a completely different environment and to see how they would behave in a different landscape. I remember my first day, everyone was really sweet and supportive of me. I didn't think it was going to last; I think the original idea was that it would be for just a couple of weeks. I feel really lucky that it's turned into as long as it's turned into."

What most stands out to you about the year or so you played Todd? "It was super-fun, really. I've known Laura [Wright, Carly] for a long time; we got our start together [on LOVING in 1992, where they played Kent and Ally] and I'd never really had a chance to work with her. Todd and Carly was a really fun dynamic. I remember shooting a scene where Carly is kind of explaining who everybody in Port Charles was and I think the line was, 'And my ex-husband, Sonny,' and Todd said, 'Sunny with a "u"?!' which I just thought was great."

For ONE LIFE fans, it was certainly interesting to see Todd living in a town where people didn't know his rap sheet. "Yeah, it was like Todd goes to summer camp and reinvents himself! To have a whole bunch of other people for him to bounce off, and for him to walk into a room full of people who didn't have preconceived notions of him, was super-fun."

The Todd/Heather Webber matchup was memorable, right down to his "Crazy Calling" custom ringtone for her. "Oh, for sure. Ron's [Carlivati, former-head writer] voice for Heather Webber was always amusing and funny and dangerous, and also sad and touching, and Robin Mattson [ex-Heather] was just an amazing person to be around. That was a really fun time at work."

Long story short, a real-life lawsuit forced the show to give you someone new to play, and they settled on Franco. "That was definitely weird for me. What I could feel and kind of sense from [the powers-that-be] was a little bit of panic. I think decisions were made really quickly and what I remember about it is that they were explaining the character's history to me the same day the character walked into *The Haunted Star* [to reveal his return from the dead] and everyone was there, so while we were shooting that scene, they were explaining the different relationships to me — Franco and Sam, Franco and Michael, Franco and Elizabeth. So, Roger was learning that in real time while Franco was reintroducing himself to these people. It was definitely fun and interesting and unlike any situation I've ever been in before."

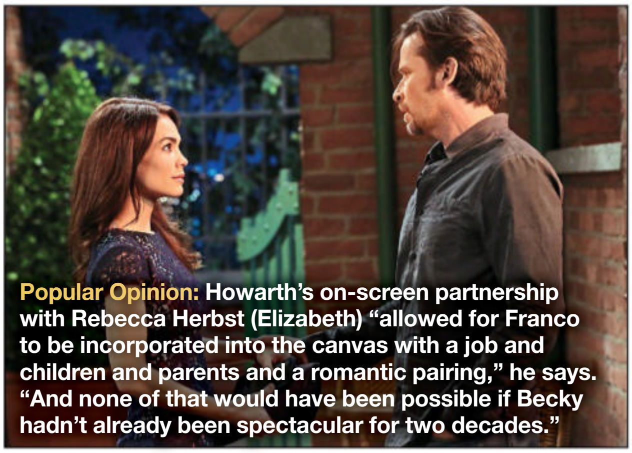
You made your Franco debut with bleached hair. Any regrets? "No, I loved that! I think I'm the only one that thought it was great, but if you want to play a different character, you have to appear different and there's only so many things that can change about the way I look. I thought it was a cool idea."

What stands out to you about working with Michelle Stafford during the Franco/Nina pairing? "Michelle brought an intelligence and creativity and spontaneity that I think the writers really ran with. It was a really fun story to be a part of. I think where it struggled is that the characters became increasingly isolated from the other characters on the canvas — they were literally two lunatics in the lunatic asylum, which didn't allow for them to interact with children and jobs and parents."

After Franco and Nina split, he rebounded with Liz, and "Friz" had a good run. "Elizabeth is a fantastic character played by an amazing actor [Rebecca Herbst] and I think the audience responded to the story because it was truly just really sweet. It was two people who'd had a difficult time and were looking for the kind of connection that they had struggled to have in their lives before. The support for the Franco and Elizabeth storyline was amazing — the people that were in were all-in, and I cannot tell you how supported I felt as an actor."

Austin hasn't had much luck in the romance department, though a contingent of fans really had hoped to see the Austin/Britt friendship go in that direction. "Kelly [Thiebaud, ex-Britt] was so great to work with. She's got a great sense of humor, she's adventurous, and she has a way of finding things in a scene that I wouldn't think were there the first time I read them on the page. She colors outside the lines and I totally respond to that."

What does it mean to you to be a part of the legacy of the show? "Listen, there is an established canvas of people on this show who have been incredible for decades and decades. I am in awe of people like Kin [Shriner, Scott] and Lynn Herring [Lucy] and Genie Francis [Laura] and Jane Elliot [Tracy], all these people who have established relationships with an audience for a long, long time. It's a really cool thing to see and be around. Although I'm not really a part of *those* legacies, I play a more tertiary role, I am glad to have the chance to say how appreciative I am to be part of a show that has been successful for so long."



Popular Opinion: Howarth's on-screen partnership with Rebecca Herbst (Elizabeth) "allowed for Franco to be incorporated into the canvas with a job and children and parents and a romantic pairing," he says. "And none of that would have been possible if Becky hadn't already been spectacular for two decades."

ABC

NANCY LEE Grahn

(Alexis Davis, 1996-present)

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

After winning a Daytime Emmy for playing SANTA BARBARA's Julia, a neurotic and brilliant attorney not terribly unlike Alexis, Nancy Lee Grahn became a mainstay of GH. "Twenty-seven years went by like crazy and now I am the longest-running consecutive woman on the show," she marvels. "How did that happen?!"

What drew you to GH? "After SANTA BARBARA, I was doing well in prime-time — but the thing about prime-time is that the odds of having a steady job are really slim. There's no genre that has stayed on longer than soap operas and I wanted to have [daughter] Kate. I could bring the baby with me; she could be in my dressing room with a nanny. It was just a perfect job to be a single mom with a steady income. I will forever be grateful to [former Head Writer] Richard Culliton and [former Executive Producer] Wendy Riche and [former Writer] Michele Val Jean for bringing me onto this show so that I could have and raise my daughter. I feel like it was divinely orchestrated. The team that works above me seems to be doing an incredibly good job!"

What stands out to you about the early days of Alexis? "You know, I used to watch GENERAL HOSPITAL. I understood when I walked in here that I was a guest in somebody else's home and I really wanted to make sure they saw that respect from me. It was a slow grow on this show; it was done very thoughtfully, which I appreciated. When you try to shove a new character down somebody's throat, that's never good; you need to give the audience a chance to *want* to be seeing you. That slow, thoughtful rise up kept me around a long time."

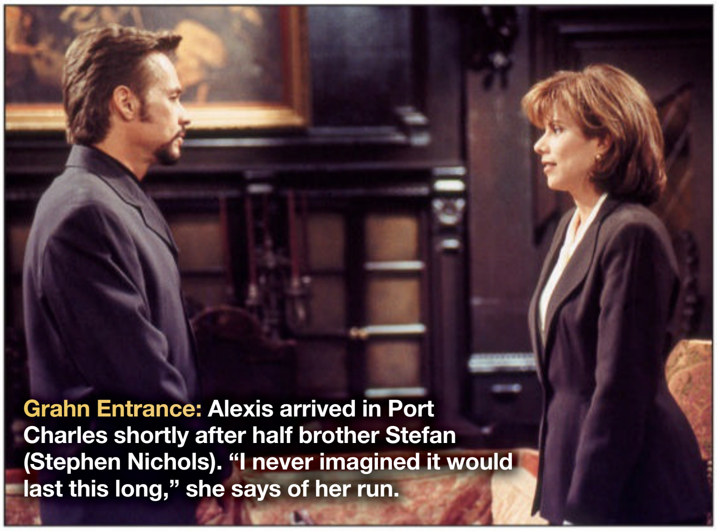
When did you feel Alexis hit her stride? "The relationship between Sonny and Alexis. It was sort of a classic setup: He's a career criminal and she's a bleeding heart defense attorney that thinks people should follow the rules. When they rolled with that, it gave Alexis some legs. My character was so different than the other women in Sonny's life. It was such an anomaly, it was sort of refreshing in a way. It was never meant to be [a long-term pairing] but it turned out to be very popular, actually. It was really enjoyable and interesting and it had drama and it was comedic. And I got [Alexis's daughter] Kristina out of it!"

When Frank Valentini took over as EP in 2012, one of his first moves was to put Alexis's menopause on pause, giving her a new burst of romantic life. "I thought her going through menopause was great and she talked about it exactly the way it feels for most women, which is, 'The store is closed! I don't ever want anybody coming around here again!' It was a parallel to my real life; it's not like they were telling my story, but I felt that way when I was going through menopause. And at 60, I met [fiancé] Richard. I was so in love and I was having more sex than anybody in this building — including Maurice [Benard, Sonny]! — and loving it and I'm still loving it. I met the hot guy just like Alexis met Julian."

That pairing really took off with fans and I feel like you had a lot of fun with their fans, the "Julexis" army. "Oh, I did. It was *really* fun. It was really hot and really thrilling and I loved that two senior citizens were the hottest couple in daytime! How great is that? How great for other women to look at that and know anything is possible, that the best is yet to come?"

That romance came to a brutal end. Was it challenging to play Julian holding a knife to Alexis's throat? "Yeah, because I was like, 'Where the hell did that come from?!' That surprised me and it surprised the audience. It was just a complete about-face and a whole new road to go down and I will say that in the fallout of it, [former Co-Head Writers] Jean Passanante and Shelly Altman did very well by me. They rode that out into her alcoholism, which was a natural decline for a woman who was sleeping with an abuser."

What does it mean to you to be a part of GH as it marks this 60-year milestone? "It's really hard to find words to match the significance of it for me. GENERAL HOSPITAL is iconic and my connection to the show is profound. It allowed me to have both my dreams, to raise my daughter *and* to do what I love to do. Having been a fan of it, having watched it, I used to imagine jumping into the TV screen and going off on adventures with Luke and Laura and the Cassadines — and then look at my life, you know? I ended up being one of them! I went off on an adventure with Luke! On a spiritual level, it cements for me the connection between heaven and earth. This show has provided me with so many things that I didn't think were possible for me at this stage in my life. This is going to sound really corny, but it's true. 'When You Wish Upon A Star' is one of my favorite songs because I always wish on stars, and when I wished for Kate, the star literally shot from left to right. Wally [Kurth, Ned] sang that song at Kate's first birthday party and those lyrics, they're not a fantasy for me. They're real. I really feel like I was meant to be here and I'm so glad things have worked out for me here because I have no intention of leaving! They're going to have to drag me out. And even then, I will not go quietly!"



Grahn Entrance: Alexis arrived in Port Charles shortly after half brother Stefan (Stephen Nichols). "I never imagined it would last this long," she says of her run.

CATHY BLAIVAS/ABC

RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC

MAURA West

(Ava Jerome, 2013-present)

Maura West thought she'd already done the Daytime Emmy-winning role of her lifetime as Carly Tenney on AS THE WORLD TURNS, but fate — and GH Executive Producer Frank Valentini — had other plans.

You were a GH fan before you ever acted on soaps, right? "Yes, and what stands out to me most, honestly — and I should have known I was destined to be a bad girl — was loving Lucy Coe, just needing to know what she was going to do, and her naughtiness and her sense of humor. That's what I remember: Lucy Coe, usually in her underwear, looking fabulous and doing something with someone or to someone. And I loved every second of it!"

How did you come to join the show? "I wasn't really intended to be there for more than a couple of weeks; my function, originally, was going to be to arrive with Kristen Alderson, Kiki, and deliver Kiki to the world of Port Charles and be on my merry way. And then even before I started, I went in and met with Frank. That first meeting with Frank, my knees went a little weak — he could have told me that the sky was green and the grass was blue and I would have believed it! I was hypnotized by him. After our very successful meeting, there was a call made to extend that [short stint] into a contract. And that was great! But I was nervous, you know, [to be working with] people like Jane Elliot [Tracy] and Tony Geary [ex-Luke] and Maurice [Benard, Sonny]. These are people that, even to someone who had been in the business as long as I had, were legends — iconic! To come to a place where they were so established and be among them, I was nervous in a healthy way. And my first scripts were with Tony! I'm like, 'Oh, come *on*!' That just made my nerves even more electric. I was worried, I was excited, I was thrilled that I'd be able to work with Tony Geary, who I'd been watching my entire young adult-to-adult life."

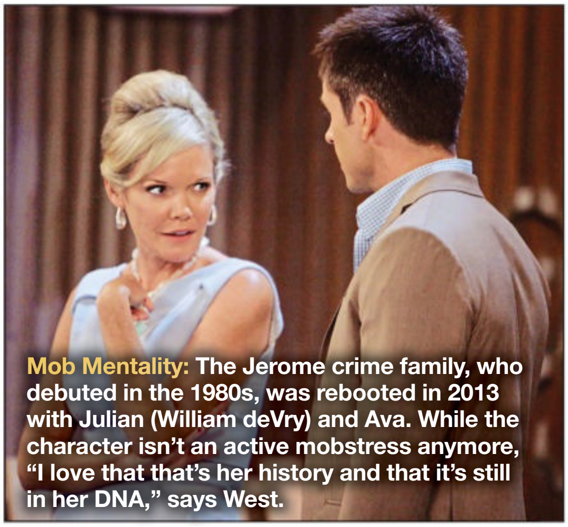
What stands out to you about the early days of bringing Ava to life? "I think Ron [Carlivati, then-head writer] was, right-on, the best person to create this character. I mean, I had a hand in creating her, as well, but he obviously watched the show. I don't know if all writers do, if all writers watch their stuff, but they should! Because we don't talk to the writers; our only communication is through the character, and he obviously watched his stuff, which is great, and so we sort of created her together without ever really talking about her, if that makes sense. He could see what I was best at and go, 'Oh, let's go farther there.' And he did!"

Ava was much more mob-forward in those days. When she shot Connie dead to stop her from revealing Julian's true identity, did you worry about your longevity on the show? "I did, because I came from the world of AS THE WORLD TURNS. Oakdale is in a different universe from Port Charles! Port Charles has a lot of people who killed people walking around; Oakdale didn't. I remember talking to Frank and saying, 'Are you *sure*?' And he just said, 'Trust me.' It kind of recalled that conversation I had with him in his office the first day I met him. 'Yeah, I'm sure. It's gonna be okay, trust me.' And so I did. And from Ava's perspective, she had to protect her brother!"

Ava's first romantic entanglement was with Morgan. What do you remember about the origins of that relationship? "I remember Frank coming up to me on set after my scenes and saying, 'Just a heads-up' — that's how he likes to do it, he likes to tell you on set, where your reactions are always tempered, you know [*laughs*]? He said, 'Ava's gonna have a relationship with Morgan.' He wasn't asking my approval because he didn't need it, but he was like, 'Is that cool?' And I just said, 'How old is he?' And he said, 'Morgan's 20,' or something like that, and I said, 'No, how old is the actor?' I think Bryan [Craig, ex-Morgan] was 21 at the time and I was like, 'Okay.' I just didn't want any teenage stuff going on, with either the actor or the character! I really liked them together; I thought that relationship was very sweet. And, of course, it added so much drama for so many people, for Sonny and Carly and their family, and her brother. It was just too much for the writers to resist, I guess! And I'm grateful, because I really enjoyed working with Bryan."

Years later, Ava's love life remains tumultuous, but she did get Wyndemere out of the deal when her marriage to Nikolas came crashing down. "I love that she was a princess for a time and that Wyndemere is hers and that she lives in a castle. It's perfect for her! Again, a screwed-up relationship. She hoped against hope that she had found love this time. I love the yearning that Ava has for complete acceptance and love. It works every time!"

What comes to mind when you reflect on GH, this show you loved as a kid, turning 60, and that you've gotten to be on it for the last 10 years? "Yeah, it's something, isn't it? It was an honor to walk on the set my first day with Tony Geary and it's still an honor now, 10 years later. [*Gets choked up*] I'm really beyond grateful for the show, for the life that it's offered me, to be an actress and a mom with a job where I can bring my kids to school. Ava Jerome is one of the best characters, not just in daytime, but on TV, and that I've gotten to play her for 10 years, it's just overwhelming, really, when I think about it."



Mob Mentality: The Jerome crime family, who debuted in the 1980s, was rebooted in 2013 with Julian (William deVry) and Ava. While the character isn't an active mobstress anymore, "I love that that's her history and that it's still in her DNA," says West.

HOWARD WISE/JPI

ALUMNI RELATIONS

GH alums weigh in on their Port Charles experiences.

HOWARD WISE/JPI

MATTHEW ASHFORD

(TOM HARDY, 1995-97)

What do you remember about getting the job on GH? "I think I just wrapped on DAYS after six years [as Jack]. [Then-Producer/Director] Shelley Curtis introduced me to Wendy Riche [then-executive producer]. She said, 'We're bringing back Tom Hardy. Are you interested in playing this character?' I knew the original guy who played Tom Hardy. He was a pretty good guy. My main thing was, 'Is he going to be Mr. Goody Two-Shoes?' They said, 'Oh. He doesn't have to be that now.' "

What stands out about the early days? "They brought me in and paired me up with Kristina Wagner [Felicia], which was great. Apparently I'm the Jack Wagner [ex-Frisco] look-alike guy. That was funny and odd. We both had a few laughs about that. Then I ended up in scenes with Tony [Geary, ex-Luke] and Maurice [Benard, Sonny]. It was all coming full circle, this experience and realizing how connected all these people are. They were very serious about what they were doing there. I was pleased and honored to be a part of it for the time that I was."

What was it like working with John Beradino (ex-Steve), who played your father? "Gosh, he was about as different from Macdonald Carey [ex-Tom, DAYS] as you could get. It would be like if Drake [Hogestyn, John, DAYS] was the patriarch of the show, add another 30 years. Another baseball guy. John was a tough guy. He wanted some good story. He wanted a good fight, so that's what they set us up for. I got a chance to come in and go through this stuff with John right toward the end of his life. One of my first scenes was with Rachel [Ames, ex-Audrey], who was a wonderful actress, and John. I was coming home. I came in the door and just launched right in on him. My character and his were not getting along at all. We went through rehearsal and one of the stage managers said, 'Hey. Go easy on the old man,' because I was letting him have it. One of the actresses, who had been there a long time, looked at me and said, 'Yeah. You want the audience to like you.' I said, 'I don't know. I'm not here to be liked.' John was there, and I know he appreciated it because he was up for a fight. It was an interesting dynamic. I looked at John, he looked at me, and it was like, 'Let's go.' We did this scene, none of us knowing that John didn't have that much longer to live. Within the end of the next year, he succumbed to pancreatic cancer and he continued to work pretty much to the end. It was just amazing. He was a tough guy."

Do you have a storyline you loved? "I probably ended up having the most fun with Kristina, doing our stuff. She had some kids, and I was her boyfriend, and we were getting closer and closer. It was fun and romantic, and I was getting the chance to do stuff that I hadn't really done on DAYS. Tom was a different character on a whole different path. I enjoyed exploring that."

How would you sum up your GH experience? "It was the place where I learned that the show was and continued to be more important than the individual. And we all had to kind of learn that in our own way. I also got a chance to meet some great people who were luminaries of this industry that I found my way into and had heard about for years. I found out that Genie Francis [Laura] and Tony Geary are pretty cool people, good actors and interesting. And Maurice is a goofball. It is a small little world and I learned that because we are all very connected. I'm glad I got to be on the show and work with patriarchs, with the people who started the show. I really got to be there at a great transitional time. I feel blessed to have been a part of that."

COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION

Couple Corner: "They brought me in and paired me up with Kristina Wagner [Felicia], which was great," recalls Ashford.

CHRIS HASTON/NBC

TAMARA BRAUN

(CARLY CORINTHOS, 2001-05; KIM NERO, 2017-19)

What stands out to you about landing the role of Carly? "After my third audition for the role, I caught a glimpse of myself in the window's reflection as I was walking out and I was so disgusted with what I saw that I went home, crawled into bed and decided I was done acting. My first acting teacher had taught me a good lesson when I first began studying. It was about rejection and not taking the rejection personally. He said that if you can do that you will be fine, but once it becomes personal, you're done for. I heeded his advice and it got me through a lot. But I hadn't worked in a very long time and for some reason, that day, leaving the audition, it became personal to me. I was done. I had to be. A couple of hours later, my phone kept ringing and I kept letting it go to the answering service. Finally, after an hour or so, I picked up my

CHRIS HASTON/NBC

BRANDON BARASH

(JOHNNY ZACCHARA, 2007-13, 2014-15, 2015-16)

What do you remember about getting the job on GH? "At the time, I was managing a men's clothing store in Beverly Hills. That was the job that would supplement the part-time acting jobs that I was getting. They were very flexible. Whenever I had an audition, they would let me leave and go to it. I was in the stockroom one day when I got an email that I had an audition for GENERAL HOSPITAL, and I had been in for Mark [Teschner, casting director] I don't even know how many times. They knew my work and they knew my range so it was a straight-to-final callback. I went into the office at the store and printed out the [audition] sides. Then I went into the stockroom, pretended I was doing stock, and started breaking the sides down because I was so excited. When I read the breakdown, I thought, 'This is right up my alley.' When I read the scene, I thought, 'I can do this in my sleep. I was meant to play this role. This role is mine.' I was that convinced. That's it. I ate, slept, breathed Johnny Zacchara for the next day and a half. I went in for the audition. As I was driving home I got the call that I booked the job."

What stands out about the early days? "Getting pulled into the writers' and producers' offices about a month or two into my run. They said, 'We initially said we were going to kill you off in two-to-three months, but we like you so much we want to extend a contract to you.' That was one of the greatest days of my life. I knew that I was officially a full-time actor. I could actually say I was a working actor and mean it. Actors are a dime a dozen out here. Very few of us are fortunate enough to say, 'I am a working actor,' and to support ourselves and our families doing so."

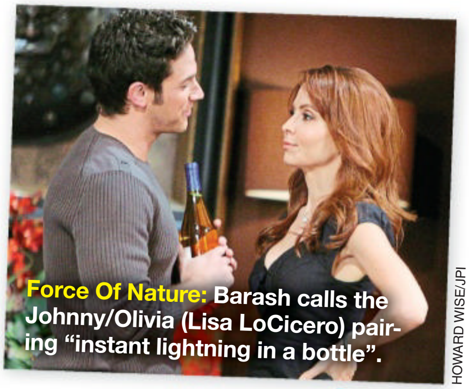
Was there a point you felt like your role was catching on? "It started catching on with viewers when they extended a contract to me. That told me everything I needed to know about the character and the job I was doing portraying him. I knew I was doing something right. Being enmeshed and at odds with Sonny Corinthos is always a great place to be."

Do you have a storyline you loved? "One story that stands out is when Johnny and Jason finally got to work together. They were searching for a cabin in the woods. It was revealed in that story that Johnny was afraid of the woods. I had a lot of fun playing that."

You had a few good on-screen romances with Julie Marie Berman (ex-Lulu), Lisa LoCicero (Olivia) and Laura Wright (Carly). What stands out about them? "It was kind of instant fire with all of them. It all seemed to work. The pairing with Julie, that was the beginning of my tenure on the show. Johnny and Lulu were kind of lightning in a bottle. Then they had this big, tumultuous breakup and Johnny was feeling sorry for himself and rebounded with Olivia. That turned into a pretty long romance. That was pretty much the same thing, instant lightning in a bottle. Then they put me with Carly, and that was an interesting pairing because Carly and Johnny had been at odds. Carly was always in Sonny's corner. It was one of the things that I thought, 'Is this going to work?' It really caught on. It was a pleasure working with all of those women."

How would you sum up your GH experience? "It was life-changing and I'm not speaking hyperbole or embellishing. It gave me the opportunity to support myself full-time as an actor. Like I said, not that many people are blessed to have that opportunity."

What does it mean to you that the show is turning 60 and you were a part of its history? "It's a lot of history, and I was a part of that history for over 10 percent of the time. I was on the show for about seven years. To be part of that legacy is not something I take lightly. I'm profoundly grateful for it."



Force Of Nature: Barash calls the Johnny/Olivia (Lisa LoCicero) pairing "instant lightning in a bottle".

HOWARD WISE/JPI

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messages and called my manager, who had been calling. She told me that GH wanted to test me. I said, 'No. I am done and I won't do it.' After a lot of talking, she finally convinced me by saying, 'Look, you've gone this far, you might as well just do the test. You probably won't get it but then you will have completed this chapter. If you do get it and still don't want it, we will get you out of it.' I tested and the rest is history."

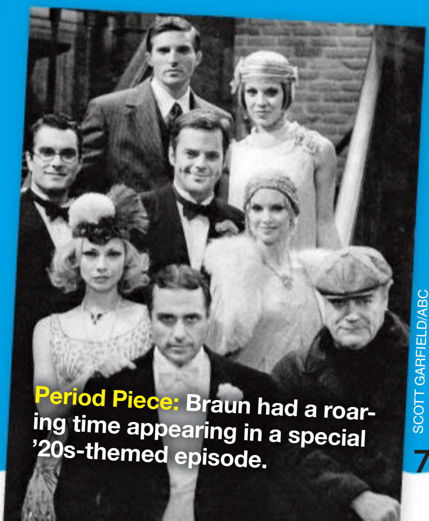
What do you remember about your first day? "It was a long day. I worked with A Martinez [ex-Roy] first up in the morning. What an incredible human being and actor. He was so kind and patient. John Homa [acting coach] came on set and he introduced himself and let me know that if I needed him for anything, he was there. In the afternoon I worked with Maurice [Benard, Sonny]. I was just running on adrenaline by the time we got to our scenes. I remember that he said he was happy that I was there and we were going to have fun."

Did you feel any pressure to make the chemistry with Maurice Benard work to keep the Carly/Sonny flame burning? "I didn't feel any pressure to do that. Maurice and I had chemistry from day one. I think you have chemistry or you don't. We did."

What are your fondest memories of your years as Carly? "I loved the 1920s episode because we had a crazy-long, 16-hour day or something. We were all happy, laughing, getting to know each other, and we got to work with people we often didn't get the chance to. We were doing something out of the GH norm. We got to play dress-up in 1920s clothes, dance, be free. It was fun and beautiful and we were enjoying doing something a little different. There was a lot of laughter. We were slaphappy. That was a very good time. A very good memory."

How did landing the GH gig change your life? "It changed my life in every way. I told Mark Teschner [casting director] at the time, and since, that he changed my acting life. The truth is, he changed my life, period. I was a banquet server at the Four Seasons Hotel and doing massage therapy while auditioning to try and get a job. And then I quit acting, really quit, was done, the moment I walked out of that third audition. No more Hollywood. No more of this business, which can be pretty awful in many ways. I'd probably be practicing the healing arts in Colorado and have a family if it hadn't been for GH."

What does it mean to you to have made an indelible mark on this iconic show? "I'm incredibly grateful to be part of such an iconic show. It's amazing to me that my four years on it so long ago still touch people. GH has been telling wonderful stories about the human condition for 60 years. I'm grateful that I could be part of sharing that on such a wide platform for a brief but impactful time in history. Happy Anniversary, GH! Thank you for the memories!"



Period Piece: Braun had a roaring time appearing in a special '20s-themed episode.

SCOTT GARFIELD/ABC

SARAH BROWN

(CARLY ROBERTS, 1996-2001; CLAUDIA ZACCHARA, 2008-09)

What was the audition process like? "It was so hard, the hardest thing I think I'd ever done in my life at that point. I did, I want to say, four auditions and a screen test, as well. The process was really difficult and stressful as a young actor, but overall, my takeaway was that it was a very welcoming, home-like community on the show [and] they had brilliant people there, like Mark [Teschner], who is a brilliant, kind, actor-loving casting director, and Wendy [Riche, then-executive producer], who was absolutely amazing to me. I did a screen test with Steve Burton [ex-Jason], which was a lot of pressure because he was iconic for me, from shows I'd watched growing up. So that was intimidating, and the role was intimidating, and the material was intimidating! But I could see that Carly could really be very special and she was, and she is today."

What was your take on Carly in her early days? "Carly came loaded with so much baggage. I think people fell in love with her because you could sympathize with her, because the writers kept her vulnerable and I tried to keep her vulnerable as the actor playing the character, and remember that she doesn't realize that what she's doing is the worst thing in the world — because I really did some terrible things as I think back on the character on the 60th anniversary! I remember some of her greatest hits."

What stands out to you about working alongside Jacklyn Zeman (Bobbie), Brad Maule (ex-Tony) and Anthony Geary (ex-Luke) through the long arc of Carly's entrance story? "It was volatile and the chemistry was explosive between the four actors you just talked about. I was sent in there to shake them all up [and] I just went with whatever they threw at me. I think that Carly genuinely fell in love with Tony and so the stakes were tremendous.... It was a brilliant, toxic mess."

You earned three Daytime Emmys during your original stint. Is that crazy to look back on? "It was the craziest time ever! It was all at once, it was all happening very quickly and it was so exciting, and I had my daughter in the middle of it, and that was really challenging. But the character had been so much fun and had so much potential and was involved in so many storylines at such a high level that I felt like it was an incredible gift that had been given to me. It was a dream come true, it really was."

How did your return to the show as Claudia come about and what appealed to you about playing a character so different from Carly? " 'So different from Carly' was the only way that I could possibly think about coming back to a show that Carly was still on. I didn't know how else it would work! I was too similar-looking to Laura [Wright, Carly] to try to be anything but the complete opposite. It appealed to me because I was a huge fan of James Gandolfini and really loved the show THE SOPRANOS and the story was kind of going into that kind of territory. [The writers] wanted Claudia to be a rival for Sonny Corinthos, not a love interest. So that was a fascinating challenge."

As GH celebrates its 60th, what does it mean to you to have such a special place in its history? "It means that the time in my life dedicating myself to the work that I did on GENERAL HOSPITAL paid off and is part of something that's still going.... I got the call that I had got the job right around my 21st birthday, and it's amazing that the place is still going and some people have been there for 40 years more. I congratulate them on a job well done and all of the hard work that's going into helping to keep the show going."

Family Feud: Carly's reunion with birth mother Bobbie (Jacklyn Zeman) was far from harmonious.

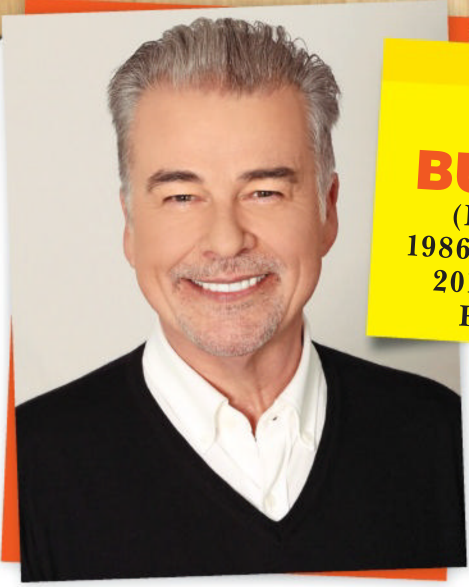
CATHY BLAIVAS/ABC

HOWARD WISE/JPI

JUDITH CHAPMAN

(GINNY BLAKE, 1984-86)

What do you remember about getting the job on GH? "I remember it *exactly*. I had been in L.A. for a couple of years, and I had been doing nighttime television and I get this call from my agent saying, '[Then-Executive Producer] Gloria Monty wants you to audition for GENERAL HOSPITAL.' I went, 'I'm not auditioning for a soap opera,' so I turned it down. A couple of weeks later, it's New Year's Day and I'm in Mexico with a former beau when I walked into the hotel and glibly asked the concierge, 'Any calls?' and he said, 'L.A. called you.' I found out it was my agent and I called her back and she said, 'I have talked to six Mexican operators and I don't speak Spanish, but Gloria Monty wants you to get your butt back to L.A.; you start work in three days!' And I said, 'That's the way I like to go to work!' The guy I was with was an actor, and he had an upcoming job, too, and there were no flights out of Manzanilla, so we hopped on the typical bumpy bus to Guadalajara, with a slight hangover, to get on a plane. We were on standby, but there was only one seat and because he worked first, I said, 'You go,' and I spent the night in Guadalajara. I got on a plane the next day, but I could only get to Tijuana, so I ended up taking a bus from Tijuana to L.A., then took a taxi to my agent's office and I started work at GH the next day. Here I wasn't interested in doing another soap, but that was my Gloria. I loved her from that moment on. I actually wanted to do another part but she said, 'No, no. I want you for Ginny Blake. This is the


JIM WARREN

IAN BUCHANAN

(DUKE LAVERY, 1986-89, 2012-15, 2016, 2017, 2020; CESAR FAISON, 2012)

How were you cast on GH? "I was in New York and didn't really know what a soap opera was, but had met the network for their talent development program, which Emma [Samms, Holly] had been a part of. That was how I was first introduced to ABC and I did a tape that [then-Executive Producer] Gloria Monty saw and she flew me out to L.A. to test with the lovely and talented Miss Finola Hughes [Anna] and that was it! Then they moved me, lock, stock and barrel, from New York to Hollywood."

To what do you attribute the insta-success of the Duke/Anna story? "I think it was very well-crafted and thought-out and I also think Gloria took a long time casting the role of Duke and saw a lot of people. She was very good at putting people together. I think with Finola and I, or Duke and Anna, ultimately, she saw a great match. The character of Duke was based on those great gangster characters from the movies of the '30s and '40s. They wrote it that way and shot it that way and lit it that way; it was all very film noir. It was very cleverly done and that's why the audience, I think, had an immediate reaction to it. Finola and I never looked at the magazines, nobody ever told us, 'It's really successful!' It wasn't until, maybe on a day off, we would shoot two magazine covers or maybe on a weekend, we would travel someplace, that we sort of realized it."

What do you remember about filming Duke and Anna's wedding? "Finola wore my grandmother's pin, like a heart-shaped pin with diamonds. It was lovely because by then, I was very settled on the show and all the cast were at the wedding and it was like a three-day thing and a lot of fun. I believe there was a real bar set up someplace. I'm not sure how that happened. I didn't know that [at the time], but there were certainly others who did! It was very long days and a lot of kilt jokes, of course. I wore my own kilt, actually, that I got in Scotland."

What comes to mind when you think about all the tangoing you did? "Our whole tango tangle was highly amusing. We had private coaches but we also went on Tuesdays to my friend's club and she had a tango class with Robert Duvall and Sheena Easton and all these other people and we all learned to tango in a circle. Really funny. But the whole setup for every time we tangoed, as I've said many times — it was like, Duke and Anna would be in a situation undercover someplace and people would be shooting and suddenly, tango music started and we'd both get up and start tangoing [*laughs*]."

When you returned in 2012, it wasn't as Duke at first, it was as Faison in a Duke mask. What do you recall about channeling your inner Anders Hove? "It was very interesting. At first, I was a little dubious, because my first thought was, 'Oh, so Duke is not alive, then?' And nobody would answer that question. But I loved getting fitted for the mask and I loved the layers of it, no pun intended. It was also great to work with Anders. I just loved that. The mask ended up at an exhibit at Disney World in Florida, by the way. They FedExed the Duke mask off!"

What does it mean to you that in 2023, this character you created in the 1980s still holds a special place in GH history? "It's pretty amazing. You know, I've done so many other things, but GENERAL HOSPITAL was a major turning point in my life, a turning point in my career. It's memorable for me and that it's memorable to other people is something I've always been very appreciative of and respect. It was very personal to me, that whole experience. Every day was like a great adventure."

Dance Fever: Anna (Finola Hughes) and Duke never turned down the opportunity to tango.

BOB D'AMICO/ABC

long-haul part,' and I said, 'Okay.' "

How was Ginny described to you? "That she was a bad girl and she shows up in town, but there was no long [story] arc yet, there was no Chris Robinson [ex-Rick] yet but I was coming in and replacing Denise Alexander [ex-Lesley]. I never worked with Denise, but she was so loved by the fans that when I first drove in, there were picket signs, 'Let Lesley Live!' and they threw tomatoes at my car. They did not want Ginny."

At that time, GH was in its heyday. What do you remember about being a part of the show? "I believe it was number one at the time, which means that most of the soap operas that I've done over the years have all been number one when I've been on. I used to joke, 'Really, you're gonna get rid of me? You won't be number one for much longer [*laughs*].' I was so silly and dramatic but my attitude was, if I'm going back to daytime in Hollywood, it better damn well be the number one soap opera."

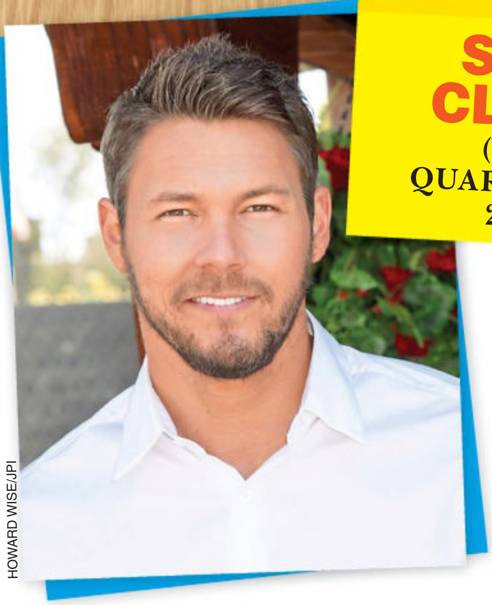
What was one of your favorite storylines on GH? "I would say Ginny getting her own talk show, killing Brock and being busted by Scorpio. There were two huge headshots of me used as the backdrop for my talk show set and they ended up in the trash bin. I fished them out and they were in my dressing room until the end."

How would you sum up your GH experience? "I resisted GH at first and then I embraced it, loved it and cherished it so much while I was there. I learned so much. Sitting next to Gloria in the booth, learning how this whole medium works. I'm directing plays to this day."

What does it mean to you that the show is turning 60 and you are part of that legacy? "It shows you the power of soap operas, it shows you the power of good old-fashioned storylines. I was so fascinated by soaps when I first did AS THE WORLD TURNS [as Natalie]. I remember an actress from GUIDING LIGHT, or one of the other shows, said, 'Not even your best friend visits you five days a week at the same time.' "

Son Shine: Chapman worked with Chris Robinson (ex-Rick, I.) and David Mendenhall (ex-Mike), of whom she raves, "He was just too precious, but he was such a good boy and then such a fine young man."

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES


HOWARD WISE/JPI

SCOTT CLIFTON

(DILLON QUARTERMAINE, 2003-07)

What do you remember about getting the job on GH? "It started with [Casting Director] Mark Teschner, with a single audition for the role of Lucas, and I did not get it. Then they recast Lucas and again, I didn't get that, either. There was a third audition for a character that was then unknown and at the end of that audition, I could see the look in Mark's eyes that I wasn't right for the role. But it was the third time he brought me in and after, he came around his desk and he shook my hand and pulled me into, like, a bro hug and he said in my ear, 'I'm going to get you on this show if it kills me.' The next audition was for Dillon and at that point, I was a little exasperated. I wasn't super-optimistic — and that was the job I ended up getting. I was thrilled and stunned at the same time."

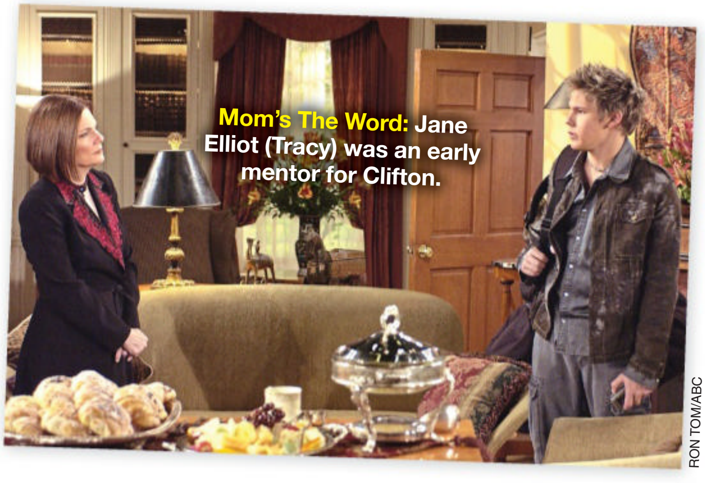
What stands out about the early days? "Working with Jane Elliot [Tracy] in conjunction with Tony Geary [ex-Luke] gave me my entire philosophy of acting and how to navigate a character. There is a popular philosophy of acting where when you get on camera, you do as little as possible. You speak in a very quiet, monotone voice. You don't move your face too much. It's as if the more subtle you are, the more real you are. Thank God, Jane was my mom and Tony was Dillon's mentor. They both, in their own ways, said to me: 'What the heck are you doing? Your job is to be entertaining. You're supposed to be interesting,' and it's true. I will forever be grateful for that because I still, even playing Liam [on B&B], obviously the emphasis is always going to be on making it authentic and having some kind of basis in reality and then, starting from there. You're supposed to make the audience's ears perk up and make their eyebrows raise just a little bit, and that value was instilled in me very early on by both Jane and Tony, and so I'm forever grateful to them for that."

When did you feel like your role was catching on? "It was pretty early on, I think. Some of my fondest memories were in the very beginning when Dillon first came on the scene and the stuff with Lucas and Georgie and Maxie. There was a period where Dillon was riding a motorcycle and he would bring Georgie on the back of the motorcycle, and that was the beginning of their ongoing relationship."

Do you have a storyline you loved on GH? "There were great storylines on GH when I was on there. They had such creative and interesting ideas, like when the Port Charles Hotel was on fire, the haunted house storyline [at the Q mansion with the show's teens], the influenza epidemic, and then the serial killer storyline. There were also some of the hokier stories, like the one with me in drag, me with erectile dysfunction, and me as the third member of the Keystone Cops. But I also loved the adventures that Dillon would go on, like when he got put in prison in the South American jail, or when he wore disguises and he would do characters. It was such a great time because every day was like a new opportunity to try something different on that show."

Thoughts on Dillon's crazy hair? "At the time, it was cool because that hair was very in. It was very punk rock, with the flat-ironing and the frosted tips. I had the earrings and the spiky wrist bracelets and collars. I wasn't that guy but to play that guy, that kind of rocker-type character, that offbeat guy, it was great fun because it was so specific. I would be mortified to have that look now. That is something that I not at all would want to be seen in public in. Wait till [son Ford] is a teenager and capable of being deeply embarrassed by me. He'll be like, 'I don't know that guy.' "

How would you sum up your GH experience? "It changed my life. It gave me the opportunity to do what I love to do — and getting paid for it. Doing a soap is the closest thing you can have to a nine to five in the acting world, and that's what every starving actor wants. They just want to know where their next paycheck is going to come from. GH launched my career in soaps and I am truly grateful for that."


Mom's The Word: Jane Elliot (Tracy) was an early mentor for Clifton.

RON TOM/ABC

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

WILLIAM DEVRY

(JULIAN JEROME, 2013-2020)

What most stands out to you about the process by which you were cast on GH? "Feels like it was yesterday. Wow. Everyone was very nice. I remember all the actors being called to stage. Together. We could literally see and hear everyone auditioning for the role of Julian. You had to have your wits about you to get through it and excel. I suppose it worked out well for me. I remember being pretty excited to join the legend that is GENERAL HOSPITAL."

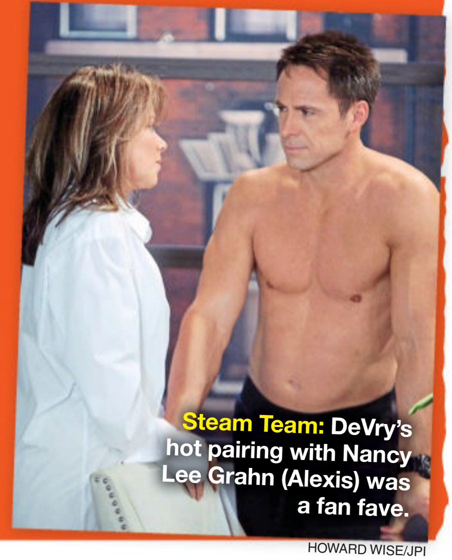
What are your most vivid memories of the early days of Julian, who was introduced using an alias, Derek Wells? "Mostly that I didn't think I'd last very long. I just don't think it was supposed to last as long as it did. But being paired with Nancy Lee [Grahn, Alexis] was the gold Julian needed to last longer than even a year. But the early days of 'Derek', working with Kelly Sullivan [ex-Connie], Kirsten Storms [Maxie], Mo [Benard, Sonny] and Laura Wright [Carly] was a lot of fun."

Do you have favorite scenes/moments/episodes

from your run as Julian? "Too many to mention. I have my Sam, Lucas, Alexis, Luke and Ava scenes that stand out. Sonny and Duke scenes. Scotty Baldwin and Dante scenes. So much great stuff."

Why do you think "Julexis" caught fire with fans the way it did? "As Frank [Valentini, executive producer] said to me once, 'I don't know what your magic is, but you look like you want to eat her' — obviously in a good, sexy way! I think the audience tunes in to daytime for a little heat and we brought the sauce. Nancy is so easy to work with in that regard. Nancy can tell if you're b.s.-ing the audience and her. When we worked together, she knew I was committed to the entire process and we just clicked. Obviously, I think, the audience felt the same way. It was really magic in a bottle. I really give a lot of credit to [then-Head Writer] Ron Carlivati and his writers for igniting that fire. He truly gave us a chance to smolder and I think Nancy and I took it as far as we could. I remember sort of being oblivious to how popular we had become."

What do you treasure most about the years you spent on GH? "Interesting question, really. 'Proud' comes to mind. The relationships you build and the few relationships that remain after you're gone. How well Nancy took care of me when I first got there. It was a wonderful eight years and I wouldn't change a thing."



Steam Team: DeVry's hot pairing with Nancy Lee Grahn (Alexis) was a fan fave.

HOWARD WISE/JPI

MARY BETH EVANS

(KATHERINE BELL, 1993-99)

CHRIS HASTON/NBC

What do you remember about getting the job on GH? "I had worked with [Producer] Shelley Curtis before at DAYS. I was off DAYS. I had left in May and got pregnant in June. My baby [youngest son Matthew] was a few months old when Shelley called me up and asked, 'What are you doing?' I said, 'Well, I just had a baby.' She said, 'I think I have a part for you on GENERAL HOSPITAL.' I never thought about going to a different show. I thought I'd be doing DAYS forever. So I was nervous about doing it. I talked to Jane Elliot [Tracy; ex-Anjelica, DAYS] and she was like, 'Shake it up. Go for it. It will be fun.' So I said yes, and that was that."

What stands out about your early days on the show? "I was young and really struggled with the thought of playing a mean girl. I wondered if I was pulling it off. But I just kept on plugging on. I also had that ongoing conflict with Lucy Coe. Actually, when I first got there, Lynn Herring really intimidated me because she's such a formidable force. I also felt like I had come from being in the cool crowd at DAYS to just starting out fresh at GH and not knowing anything. As time went on, and the more Nurses' Balls and things we did together, I think I earned her respect. Then things felt better."

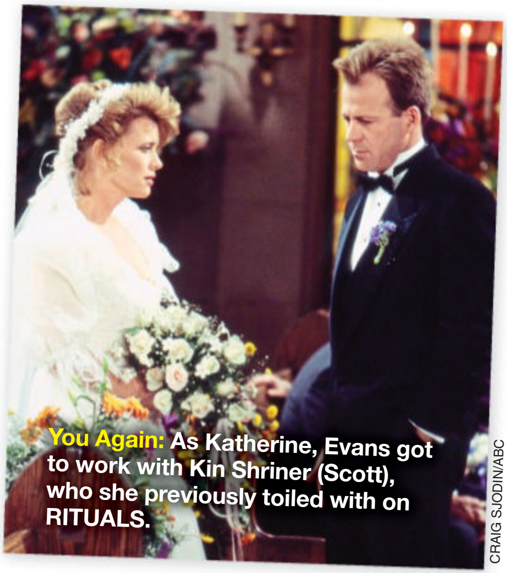
Katherine had a few romances. What stands out to you? "All the stuff I did with John York [Mac] was very cozy and fun. There was a whole little romance with him. We had all these bubble bath scenes. I also had a whole thing with Kin Shriner [Scott] on the show. I had had things with him before. The very first thing I ever did in the soap world was RITUALS, and I had his surrogate baby on that show."

Then, of course, Stephen Nichols, who you'd created magic with at DAYS, came aboard as your love interest, Stefan. How did you feel about that? "Stephen was off DAYS, and I had had lunch with him. I said, 'You need to come to the Emmys with me so Wendy Riche [then-executive producer] can see how great you are.' It was cool that he came to GH. They put us together, but I don't think it was ever as successful as DAYS's Patch and Kayla. [The pairing] didn't have the sweet, vulnerable love stuff that Patch had, where he was wounded. It did work, but it wasn't as enduring as Patch and Kayla."

What are your memories of working with Tyler Christopher (ex-Nikolas) and that whole May/December relationship? "It was wonderful. I think I was his on-screen first kiss. He was such a doll baby. I remember when our characters were going to have an affair. I told him, 'If you call me mommy, it's over.' And I was, like, 33 at the time."

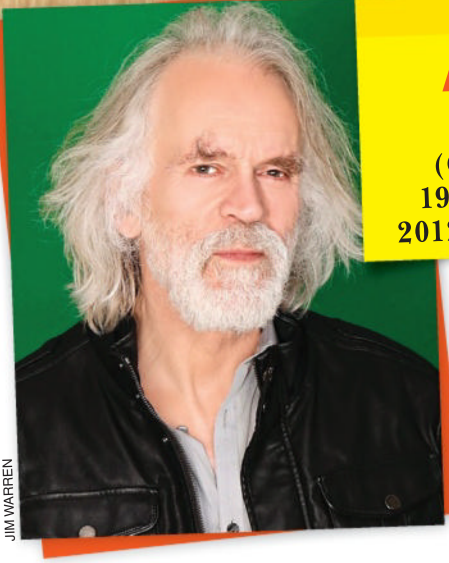
Do you have a storyline you loved? "I loved the triangle with Stephen and Tyler. To work with both of those guys was great. It was crazy and controversial. Wally Kurth [Ned] and Rena Sofer [ex-Lois] and I were all in a triangle together, too. I remember we did a cover for *Soap Opera Digest* with Rena and me in wedding dresses. I said to Wally, 'This isn't fair because you guys are getting married in real life. You're going to pick her, I know it [*laughs*].' That was all really fun, too."

How would you sum up your GH experience? "It was really great. I had trouble adjusting in the beginning, like I said. But there were so many fun people on that show. Lynn and I became friends. Kin, who I adore, was there. So were Wally, John Ingle [ex-Edward] and Billy Warlock [ex-A.J.]. It was a great group. I have really great memories of working with Shelley and Wendy. There were all these women running the show, and there were awards and stuff going on. I was glad to be part of such a fun, hip, cool time."



You Again: As Katherine, Evans got to work with Kin Shriner (Scott), who she previously toiled with on RITUALS.

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC



JIM WARREN

ANDERS HOVE

(CESAR FAISON, 1990-92, 1999-2000, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2018)

As an actor from Denmark, how did you end up on an American soap opera? "Ann, my wife, is American. She's a ballet dancer, worked the last 20 years as a teacher at The Royal Ballet. Ann felt a need to go back to the U.S. after some 10-plus years in Denmark, so in 1989, now with two kids, we went to L.A. I truly don't know what we were thinking. I got a job at something called Go Between delivering scripts and breakdowns at agencies, way before the Internet. I got an agent. I got a stage job and in early 1990, I auditioned for [Casting Director] Mark Teschner. Mark kept calling me back — thank you, Mark! We had a good chemistry and the last audition I played was with Finola [Hughes, Anna]."

What do you remember about getting the job on GH? "It was all new to me. I had no idea what I was going into. But I'll never forget Donna [Messina, GH's late head of makeup]. She boosted my confidence during the auditions and while working on GH, and I needed that from time to time.

Sitting in her makeup chair was the best. She was an actor's friend in the best sense of the word. She was sharp and fun. I miss her a lot. We all do. Getting the job changed my life. We could stay in L.A., feed the kids, buy a car, make good friends [like] Kin Shriner [Scott], a dear friend of mine. We talk at least once a year on December 6, his birthday."

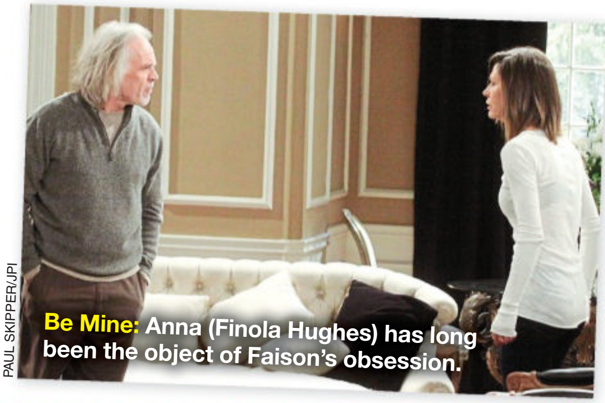
Faison's obsession with Anna was a throughline for the character. Tell us about working with Finola Hughes. "Finola and I rehearsed. There was room for improvisations, respect for each other. We had a great time off stage, as well, which makes work so much easier. We still follow each other: kids, work, the world, life. Finola, Tony [Geary, ex-Luke] and Kin taught me the soap."

What does it mean to you that fans consider Faison to be one of the great villains in the history of the show? "It's a beautiful feeling, and I'm grateful it turned out that way. Who wouldn't be? It's due to a lot of generosity, support, lots of patience from the incredible crew, Finola making it work, showing me the patience, believing in the character of Faison, believing me, our work, the writers believing in what they saw, and then some hard work. I didn't know the word 'tenacity' until one day Lynn Herring [Lucy] stopped me in the hallway and looked me straight in the eyes and said, 'You have tenacity.' It was a great compliment. Thank you, Lynn. I could go on. There are so many things which have to click."

After such a long gap, did it surprise you to be asked back to the show in 2012? "Seeing Mark Teschner's name coming up on my phone, I didn't quit believe it. It could be a mistake. Whatever, but it was not. Realizing you're appreciated for what you do is special. I owe Mark a lot. He started/defined my life as an actor in the U.S. It all started with the audition for Mark."

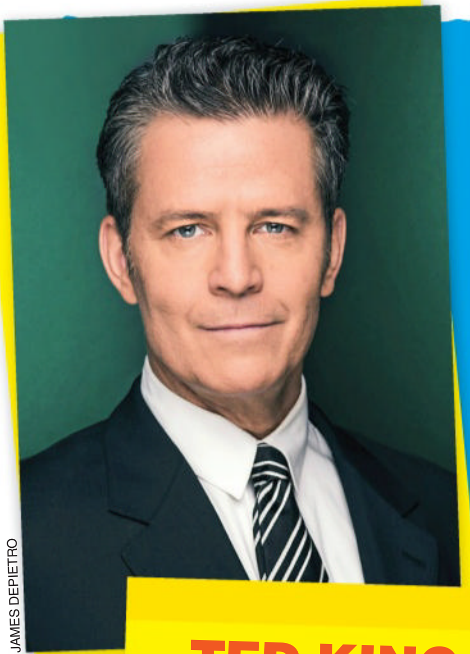
How did you feel about Faison being killed off? "I've tried it a few times, it's not fun. It's a strange day on the set. You know you're out, no matter how hard you fight it. The next day, you know you're not there. The show goes on and is just fine, too, without you. That hurts a bit but the friends remain."

All in all, what does it mean to you to hold such a unique place in GH history? "I can only express my gratitude to the audience, the fans, to the crew in every department, my colleagues and the 5th floor at GH. It's been a true privilege. Many more happy years to GH!"



PAUL SKIPPER/JPI

Be Mine: Anna (Finola Hughes) has long been the object of Faison's obsession.



JAMES DEPIETRO

TED KING

(LUIS ALCAZAR, 2002; LORENZO ALCAZAR, 2003-07)

How did GH come your way? "I had just come off of a prime-time series and shooting a film in South Africa. When I got back, my representation asked me, 'How would you feel about doing four months on GENERAL HOSPITAL?' I said sure, so they brought me on the show basically to bring Vanessa Marcil's Brenda back; she had been off the air for a couple of years. We quickly found out that Luis was not the nicest guy and was an arms dealer and that's how he had made all this money. So the writing was on the wall for Luis, that he wasn't going to be on the canvas for too long, which was exactly what I signed up for. But during the time that I was there, I really enjoyed working with the cast and crew much more than I anticipated I would, so I was very disappointed when the time came to kill him off, even though I knew it was coming. There were rumors that they were going to find a way to bring me back. But Luis was killed in a way that's difficult to bring back — Alexis pushed him out of a window and he fell on a car with blood coming out of his ears. So they asked me would I like to come back as Luis's brother."

What was it like to create Lorenzo? "I got excited with ideas of what this guy was like. I actually had a dream of what Lorenzo Alcazar would look like when he showed up on the television screen and it was long hair, a beard and cowboy boots. I don't know why I had that dream but I did, and so I started growing my hair out and my beard out and we had discussions with the head writers and it was decided that he was the younger brother of Luis; that he was not, in fact, a twin. So by the time I came on, we created something that was definitely different than Luis, more sensitive, more interesting, multidimensional. He had beautiful, tender moments but then he also had fairly violent moments with the men that worked for him that weren't doing their job properly. So he was an interesting character to play. And then I ended up doing that for almost five years."

Do you have a favorite storyline that you played as either character? "I had really great female co-stars when I was there with Tamara Braun [ex-Carly] and Robin Christopher [ex-Skye], and just phenomenal actors that I was able to bounce ideas off of and work with in a way that was, I think, interesting to watch. I don't know that I had a favorite, but I can remember really impactful moments. I think the one that the audience generally points

GILLES TOUCAS/COURTESY OF BELL-PHILLIP TELEVISION INC.

SEAN KANAN

(A.J. QUARTERMAINE, 1993-97, 2012-14)

What do you remember about getting the job on GH? "It was an interesting period in my career. I had a series of fairly high-profile jobs. I had done *Karate Kid 3*. I did a television movie for Oliver Stone and then I joined the cast of THE OUTSIDERS, which was Francis Ford Coppola, and then I hit a snag in my career. I had to do some real soul-searching and what I came up with was, I was getting cast in the same parts, and they weren't really difficult parts that required me to stretch my acting muscles because I didn't have a whole lot of acting muscles at the time. I was a very new actor and had a sequence of jobs based upon a very narrow skill set. I needed to get serious with my pursuit. Getting GH was really the first big job of any importance that I got after taking the time to work on myself as an actor. I was aware that GH was a big deal. I largely got the audition because of Steve Burton [ex-Jason], who was my friend and my cousin. They were looking for someone to play Steve's brother and who looked like Steve, and he and I had a pretty remarkable resemblance."

Since this was your first soap, who showed you the ropes? "I'll never forget when Wally Kurth [Ned] and I went out to lunch before I started the show. He was so kind and took time out of his schedule and said, 'This is what to expect, and if you ever need someone to talk to or have any questions, I'm your guy.' Wally and I had some terrific scenes together. We had a very adversarial relationship on camera but I've always liked and respected Wally a great deal. The relationship between Ned and A.J. was priceless. When he called me 'the vice president of paper clips' it was priceless [*laughs*]. It was always a great time working with Wally."

What stands out about the early days? "When I got on the show, I was very serious. I really wanted to excel at this and I remember how wonderful Stuart Damon [ex-Alan] and Leslie Charleson [Monica] were to me. As my time progressed on the show, it was a really exciting time to be there and work with Vanessa Marcil [ex-Brenda] and Ricky Martin [ex-Miguel]. Tony [Geary, ex-Luke] and Genie [Francis, Laura] had just come back, so I came on at a very interesting time on the show. Those were the positives."

When did you feel like your role was catching on? "I had a lot of stuff going on personally that I was dealing with, which was difficult, and I also felt A.J., as a character, had never been championed by the show, and it was a difficult role to play for me. I think it's been a difficult role for the other actors who've played A.J., as well. On a lot of levels, it was frustrating for me because I was really invested in it. I honestly think I did the best job that I could at that time. But all in all, I think things worked out the way they were supposed to."

Do you have a favorite storyline? "I think the triangle with Keesha was a good storyline. I liked that one. I liked having the opportunity to do things with Amber Tamblyn [ex-Emily], where A.J. was able to be an older brother. In those scenes, he was a good guy. Of course, we did that big storyline with Stone having HIV. That was difficult to do. I have many friends who are gay and having to play a character who was so unevolved was difficult because that is so far from who I am. But I realized it was an important story to tell and if that was my role in being one part of telling the story, then I was going to do it to the best of my ability. I just wish A.J had more of a chance."

How would you sum up your GH experience? "It changed my life, because soap operas are so ingrained into the fabric of television. They've got these incredible longitudinal fan bases, so when you get on one, you are very much a part of something much bigger than yourself and you become very well-known very quickly in some respects. I have a wonderful relationship with the show and for all the great opportunities that they've given me. I was very happy there and I am honestly full of gratitude."

What does it mean to you that the show is turning 60 and you were a part of its history? "It's funny. The last time I came back, it was for the 50th anniversary. It's hard to believe how time just flies. I was very appreciative of [Executive Producer] Frank Valentini for bringing me back, and of course, [Casting Director] Mark Teschner and again, I do think there was some good work done. Now, it is a time of celebration! It's a remarkable accomplishment that GH is celebrating its 60th and I want to wish all of the actors, especially my former co-stars and the production team and the writers and the crew, all my best on a job well done."

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Sibling Revelry: Kanan's resemblance to real-life cousin Steve Burton (ex-Jason) helped give him an edge.

to is when Carly was pregnant and was being held captive in the woods by Lorenzo and they started to fall in love, which was wild. She went into labor and right as Lorenzo was delivering the baby, Sonny broke through the front door and shot Lorenzo in the back and, of course, the bullet went through Lorenzo and into Carly. There was a lot of drama there and it was a good, good storyline."

As both characters, you went up against the mob. What was it like to work with Maurice Benard (Sonny)? "I've always respected Maurice's work and looked forward to working with him. When I was playing Luis, we had a much closer relationship than when I was playing Lorenzo because part of the reason why they brought that character on was to steal Carly from Sonny and I don't think that he appreciated that [*laughs*]. So I was doing my job that I was hired for and he was doing his job that he was hired for and it was a great rivalry, in the fashion of Magic Johnson and Larry Bird or any of the great sports rivalries. Two players that are going to give it their all, and it was great for the show."

How would you sum up your GH experience? "It was an incredible education, just a great opportunity for me to dig deep and explore acting and push my own work. I'm grateful to have been part of a huge show that exists in people's lives as if it's a part of their family; that's pretty special and pretty mind-blowing for me as an actor."

SCOTT GARFIELD/ABC

With A Bang: Delivering Carly's (Tamara Braun) baby in the woods was a memorable moment for King.

NATALIA LIVINGSTON

(EMILY BOWEN-QUARTERMAINE, 2003-08; 2013; REBECCA SHAW, 2009)

What stands out about the early days? “Of course, I was a little nervous coming in, especially as a recast because I knew how loved Amber [Tamblyn, ex-Emily] was, but everybody welcomed me right away. I felt lucky to be joining the show as part of a family. Those Quartermaine scenes were crazy and chaotic, in a fun way. There was a lot of comedy there, which you don’t always get to see on soaps.”

What was it like being a Quartermaine? “It was fantastic. I remember the first time I met Stuey [Damon, ex-Alan], and I miss him. He was such a dear, dear person. He was a sweet man. He just walked toward me with open arms and gave me the biggest, warmest hug, and that’s how he was throughout.”

When did you feel like your role was catching on? “The early scenes between Emily and Nikolas, when we saw there was chemistry there and believed this would be an amazing couple. That early period when Tyler [Christopher, ex-Nikolas] and I first got to work together, it was like, ‘Wow this is a great pairing. We really have something here,’ and the writers and the producers were really behind it, and I think the fans really liked it, so that was a very exciting time for me. It solidified my place at GH. That felt good on a personal level. I started to feel secure and comfortable.”

You had two very important stories involving breast cancer and rape. What was it like to play such heavy material? “It was very emotional and there were times when it was very difficult to get through. I was very honored that they trusted me with these important stories to tell. We got a lot of feedback from fans who thanked us for shining a light on these issues. I was very proud to be a part of that.”

Any other memorable storylines? “When Zander died. I loved working with Chad [Brannon, ex-Zander]. I thought those scenes were really powerful. I thought the Metro Court hostage situation was very well done and I really felt good about my acting in that, and then marrying Nikolas. I thought the wedding to Nikolas was very special.”

What was your reaction when they killed off Emily? “I was surprised. It was right around the time my contract was about to expire and that’s when they told me that [she] was going to be killed off. As you can imagine, it was a sad time. But, it wasn’t too long after that when they said they got so many calls from fans that they said they had another story in mind for Emily and they brought her back as a figment of Nikolas’s imagination.”

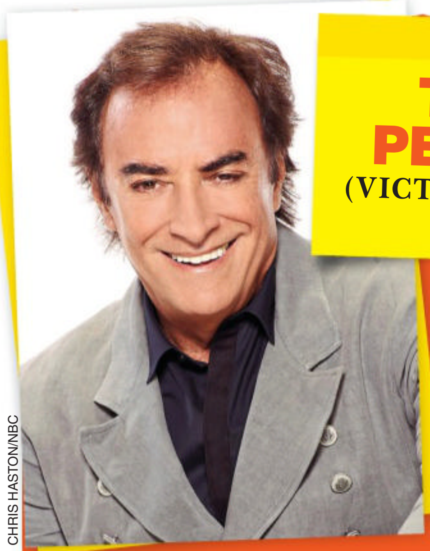
Then they brought you back again as Emily’s doppelgänger, Rebecca Shaw. “That was pretty short-lived but it was great to see everyone again and be back on the show again.”

What is your favorite memory of working on GH? “The people. I have so many friendships that have lasted long after GENERAL HOSPITAL. I’ve spoken to Tyler and that’s been nice. He was someone I’d see every day for almost a decade so he’s special to me and I consider him a friend. Rick Hearst [ex-Ric] is one of my dearest friends. We were both living in Atlanta and we became really close. He’s in New York now but he’s like family. I still have my girls, who are my dearest friends. Tamara Braun [ex-Carly et al] and I will stay on the phone for, like, two hours. Cyndy [Preston, ex-Faith] and I talk all the time. I just saw Alicia [Leigh Willis, ex-Courtney] a few weeks ago. And Steve [Burton, ex-Jason] and Maurice [Benard, Sonny] will text around the holidays, so that’s really nice.”

What does it mean to you that the show is turning 60 and you were a part of its history? “GH is such an iconic show, and I am just so grateful that I was a part of it for as long as I was, off and on, for 10 years. I certainly miss it, and I love keeping up with everybody and seeing what everyone is up to. And, I’m just thrilled to be a part of it here.”

Full Circle: Livingston developed a close connection to Tyler Christopher’s Nikolas, and they’re still in touch today.

TOM QUEALLY/ABC



CHRIS HASTON/NBC

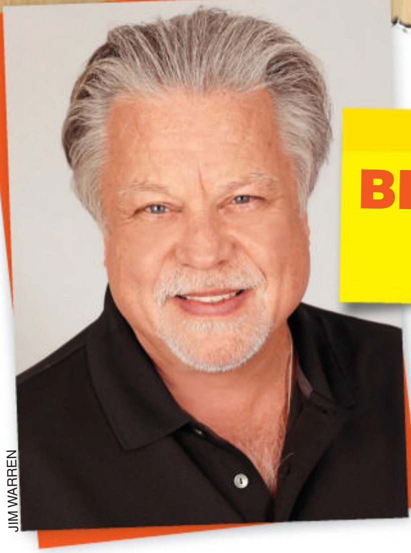
THAAO PENGHLIS

(VICTOR CASSADINE, 1981, 2014)

How did the role of Victor come your way? “I had just finished *Altered States*, and then I had all these wonderful meetings about films and then we had the nine-month SAG strike, and there was nothing else around except daytime. I remember I went in to meet with the casting director and they had the story they were developing with the Cassadines, the rich, villainous adversaries of Luke and Laura. So I went in and I auditioned, I tested, didn’t get it. The word was, ‘It really is about America, American audiences, American stories, no foreigners.’ They chose Andre Landzaat [ex-Tony], funny enough, and they needed a brother that could be stronger and be able to stand up to John Colicos, who played Mikkos, and Gloria Monty [then-executive producer] remembered me. So they brought me in and they tested me again and I got it. My first day was so unbelievably difficult. I can’t remember how many lines I had and I couldn’t remember them. And I’d been doing nighttime and movies. So Gloria came down — God bless that woman; she was extraordinary — and she said, ‘Honey, you’re doing very well, we’ll shoot a speech at a time for you.’ I was so relieved. I mean, this had never happened before, but she really liked me. It was a great experience.”

What do you remember about the Cassadine story? “I remember standing with John Colicos on set and we were going over our criminal plans about conquering the world and there was Tony Geary [ex-Luke] impersonating one of the guards and he was just standing there while we’re talking. I turned around to the director — and I was there for only a month — and said, ‘You know, we really shouldn’t have him on set because if anybody’s going to discuss plans like this, they wouldn’t have anybody else around to listen.’ And he said, ‘Well, I’m sorry, but that’s how the story is,’ and all I can remember was someone screaming, and it was Gloria: ‘*He’s absolutely right*.’ She comes storming on the set, turns to the director and he put two hands in front of his crotch as if it was about to be castrated and she said, ‘He is absolutely right, we shouldn’t have anybody else on the set while they’re discussing the plans.’ And Tony Geary jumped up in the air with his fist and said, ‘*Finally*! We have an actor on this set.’ ”

Do you have any other memorable Gloria stories? “She called me into her office and said, ‘Well, what’s it like to be the only actor out of the 30 actors we hired this summer that’s going to remain?’ And I went, ‘Oh, that’s sweet,’ and she goes, ‘No. I want you to remain. You’re going to be out for a few weeks because of what you were doing as a villain, but we’ll bring you back and we’ll forgive you, but I want you to hold off and you’ll be hearing from us.’ I said


JIM WARREN

BRAD MAULE

(TONY JONES, 1984-2006, 2019)

What is your GH casting story? "I replaced Andy Gibb on the American Movie Awards to sing the nominated song 'Arthur's Theme' — on the day of the show. I was an unknown at the time, but my agent from William Morris suggested me to David Frost, the producer, for a last-minute replacement. I went over to the [Hollywood] Palace Theater, sang the song for them, they said, 'Okay,' and rounded up an usher's tux for me to wear for the show. A couple of hours later, I was introduced by the host, Roger Moore, and went on live and sang the song. After the show, I was chauffeured to Chasen's restaurant on the corner of Beverly and Doheny Drive, walked in, and for just a moment, I truly felt what it was like to be a star. After a sort of dream-like experience of old Hollywood glamour, the limo picked me up, did a U-turn and dropped me less than a block away from the restaurant. I lived in a $150 a month studio apartment on Doheny Drive. Very much a Cinderella story — the next day I went back to my old life as a struggling actor. On Monday morning after the awards, casting from GENERAL HOSPITAL suddenly called me in to read for the role of Frisco Jones. The legendary Gloria Monty [then-executive producer] had seen me sing on the show. I went in and read for Frisco, screen-tested by reading scenes with John Stamos [ex-Blackie]. I didn't get the role, but Gloria created the role of Frisco's brother, Tony, for me, and the rest is history, as they say."

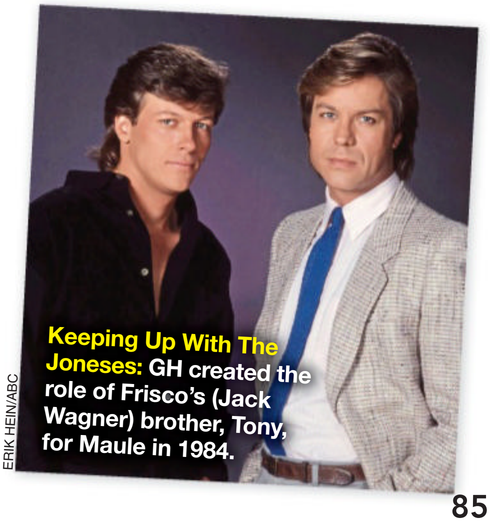
When you think about the years you worked alongside people like Jack Wagner (ex-Frisco), Hilary Edson (ex-Tania), Lynn Herring (Lucy) and Jackie Zeman (Bobbie), what stands out most vividly to you? "When I think about working alongside all those great people, I remember most how in awe I was of all of them and the great friendships that came from those days. Some are still very close to me and some have gone on with their lives, but I loved them one and all as best I knew how."

The death of B.J. remains one of the most acclaimed storylines the show has ever told. What do you remember about filming it, and saying good-bye to Brighton Hertford (ex-B.J.) as Tony was saying good-bye to B.J.? "We actually filmed the death and good-bye of B.J. in one take without rehearsal. I didn't have the composure, or perhaps the strength, to properly say good-bye to Brighton or her character B.J. and I'm sorry for that. I had lived that story in my own life when my brother died at 17 — I was 13 — and though I wasn't truly aware of the connection as we filmed, I was a wreck and just tried to get the lines out as best I could. Jackie Zeman was the true hero that day. She made sure that everyone on set kept it as professional as possible. That's the way I always think of Jackie ... kind, loving, strong, selfless, taking care of everybody before her own self. She is one of a kind."

Tony was killed off in 2006. What was your last day of work like? "My last day at work on GH was bittersweet? Devastating? Hell on earth? Beautiful? The scene itself consisted of Tony's family and friends coming to say good-bye, as actors and real-life friends, I guess. I wish I could say it was 'just another day in show business', but it wasn't. Honestly, it took me a long time — and [moving to] Texas — to get to the point where I could look back on it all and say, 'It was the best thing for the show and for me.' "

Did you have a nice experience when you returned as Tony's ghost in 2019? "Coming back to the show as a ghost was very much like what I imagine a real ghost would feel like — invisible, a faint shadow on the edges of the room, spooking some people, making some laugh, but most going, 'What was that?' It's always an honor to come back from the dead on a soap."

GH is turning 60 and you made an indelible impact on its legacy. What does your role in the show's history mean to you? "I was there for 22 of those years, people still remember the scene where I listened to B.J.'s heart, and finally, I never disrespected the show or the soap opera genre. As a child on a farm in West Texas, I dreamed of being in show business. Actually, my dreams were much more basic than that: I wanted to fly on a plane and get my Actor's Equity card. I did it. The rest of it has all been cream."


ERIK HEIN/ABC

Keeping Up With The Joneses: GH created the role of Frisco's (Jack Wagner) brother, Tony, for Maule in 1984.

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thank-you and then it was [then-Head Writer] Pat Falken Smith who turned around and said, 'I want you on DAYS OF OUR LIVES.' She was leaving to go there. And the headline on the top of a magazine was, 'The one that got away.' It was kind of an interesting situation. Let's face it, when you're first starting out in movies and theater, you're not paid very much, but it was a good salary and it was a continuation of work and it paid off for all the years of study I had done before I became an actor. And I remember Gloria took a bunch of us out to lunch one time, and she said, 'Darling, come over here and sit next to me.' So I sat next to her and she says, 'I want you to get out of daytime. You're too good.' And I never forgot it because there was a lot of criticism because she was so straightforward and brutal, but I never had that experience. The only experience I had with that was when she found out I was going on to DAYS OF OUR LIVES. She was very upset."

How did you react when they called to bring you back in 2014? "When the producer called me and asked me to do it, I was a little bit like, 'Who was Victor Cassadine? How did he develop? He had been in prison. What has happened? He's an adult now with all the other brothers gone and he was alone.' So I came in with a lot of energy. I like Frank Valentini [EP]. He's been very successful and he's got a good cast."

What does it mean to you that GH is turning 60 and that you were there for a very exciting time during its history? "I'd like to say congratulations to all who are a part of its long run, from the crew to wardrobe to producers, directors, actors and writers. The fact they've survived 60 years is extraordinary. That it's given so many people work, we should applaud them."

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Good Company: "Sharon [Wyatt, ex-Tiffany] made it so easy. She was a beautiful woman and a beautiful person and I certainly enjoyed working with her," raves Penghlis.

SEAN SMITH/COURTESY OF BELL-PHILLIP TELEVISION INC

RENA SOFER

(LOIS CERULLO, 1994-97)

How did the role of Lois come your way? "I had done LOVING and known Mark Teschner [casting director], and when I moved out to California, Mark set me up with an agent who I am still with to this very day. He called me and said, 'Would you be interested in doing a soap again?' And I was like, 'I don't want to do a soap again,' because if you're not the Brooke [on B&B] or the Brenda [on GH], you sit around for a long period of time. And for me, when I was on LOVING, Rocky just never really went anywhere. So he was like, 'Just go out to dinner with me and we'll talk about it,' and I said okay. He brought the sides with him and he said, 'Just read it with me,' and he gave me the breakdown of it. And she was from Brooklyn and I said, 'Do you want me to do an accent?' And he goes, '*Can* you do an accent?' And I said, 'Of course I can do an accent!' So as I was doing the whole thing, he was like, 'Awesome, will you audition for it?' So I auditioned for the show and I did well on the first audition, came back and then did the screen test with Wally [Kurth, Ned]. And according to lore and maybe Wally if you spoke to him, he said, 'She's the one! Why are we looking at anyone else?' "

What do you remember about your early days there? "Well, it was Wendy [Riche, then-executive producer] and Shelley [Curtis, then-producer] and Claire [Labine, then-head writer] and Francesca [James, then-producer]. I mean, to go back in time and just take that moment and go, 'This is incredible; these women were in charge of this show.' I was playing the beloved, created character of the head writer who was brilliant and I can't even tell you how much I loved playing Lois. I loved who she was, I loved how she was so honest. All she wanted to do was manage a band, make music, do math and be smart, and she fell in love with this singer at a bar, so she was able to stand out and didn't have to be what you always see on soap operas."

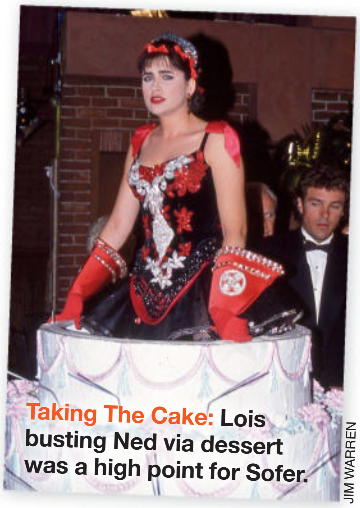
Brenda and Lois were close. How would you characterize your relationship with Vanessa Marcil (ex-Brenda)? "When I was younger, she was the girl that I would always wish would be my friend. She was just the most beautiful, everybody was interested in her, she just had this way about her. I loved working with her; I absolutely loved it. I think we had a really beautiful relationship. We still do; I still adore her."

You also worked with Ricky Martin (ex-Miguel) as part of that story. What stands out about him? "Literally one of the nicest, loveliest human beings I've ever met in my life. Years and years and years later, I saw him at a bar in Los Angeles and he was just like, '*Rena*!' I wouldn't forget somebody like that, but he's massively famous and why would he remember me? And yet he did. He was kind, loving and amazing, but as Lois and working with Ricky, English was his second language. He didn't speak it very well and he had all these lines he had to remember and I liked to go to work and go home, and he just kept going up and up on his lines, so I, as Lois, decided to start being the kind of person who finished his sentences. So, as Lois, I would say his line, like, 'I know what you mean. You mean blah blah blah blah blah blah,' and I was just, like, 'Ricky, I'll take care of it, don't worry.' I don't know if he appreciated it or not. I just was trying to help in my very mid-20-year-old way that may not have been acceptable but I did it anyway. I've learned a lot since then."

Ned and Lois became a huge couple. What is it about that you think connected with the audience? "I think many things. It didn't hurt that Wally and I were falling in love while Ned and Lois were falling in love. So, really, what everyone was seeing was this real love story happening in real time in real life. But I also think there was B.J.'s heart and the AIDS storyline and the show was brilliant during that time but you needed the relief, you needed the humor, and I think Ned and Lois were able to bring, in that moment, the music and the humor."

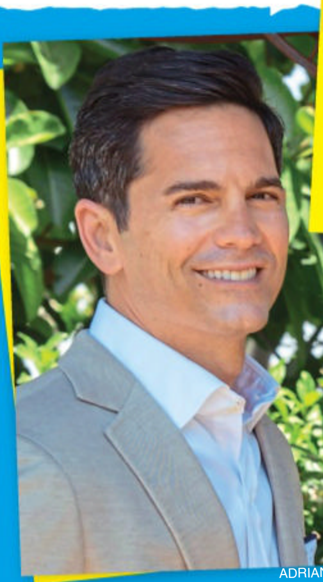
Do you have a favorite storyline? "Oh! Jumping out of the cake [to bust Ned's double life]. That was my favorite scene by far because it was iconic, but it was also the way Lois would have done it. It was the best. And I can't talk about favorite anything without saying that I loved the fact that Ellen Travolta played Lois's mom, Gloria. That was just the joy of my life."

What do you remember about winning the Emmy? "I never expected to win, because I really thought it was going to go to Jackie Zeman [Bobbie]. I just remember understanding that I was being recognized for doing something different. And I felt like I *had* done something different. I had made a mark on a show."


Taking The Cake: Lois busting Ned via dessert was a high point for Sofer.

JIM WARREN

What does it mean to you that the show is turning 60 and you played a role in its history? "There's something about that as an actor that makes you go, 'Oh, I wasn't just on a bunch of failed pilots. I was actually on something that people all around the world watch and love.' So it's something to be proud of, for sure."


ADRIAN SIDNEY

MICHAEL SUTTON

(MICHAEL "STONE" CATES, 1993-95, 2010, 2017)

What do you remember about the audition? "My mom and my grandmother watched the show daily, way before I got on, so any day I wasn't in school, I would see GENERAL HOSPITAL. So the audition was special for that reason. When I did my screen test, it was with Antonio Sabato [ex-Jagger]. I knew Antonio was a couple of years younger than me because he was friends with one of my friends. Prior to the screen test, I reached out to my friend, Matt Borlenghi [ex-Brian, ALL MY CHILDREN], and told him about the audition and he said, 'Oh, Antonio is the coolest, tell him you're a friend of mine, we grew up together.' So, that was the icebreaker when I went in for the screen test. I told Antonio, 'I know Matt,' and we had a nice conversation and it put me at ease. The screen test went great. I just went for it! I just figured, 'This is my mom and my grandma's show, I deserve to be on this show, they would love to see me on this show.' I think I got the news that I got the part on my birthday and started taping two weeks later and then was on it every day for three years. So, it was a crazy, whirlwind experience."

What stands out to you about your early days on set? "Well, first off all, I had never acted before. I went to film school; I was dabbling in acting, I was taking some classes and I was committed to it, but I had nowhere near the skill set [the job required]. So when I got the role, it was very overwhelming for me; I was processing so much dialogue, doing an episode a day, five days a week. Maurice Benard [Sonny], who I was doing most of my scenes with, came in [and] took me under his wing and really nurtured me and mentored me. I also decided to do a play, which I'd never done before, and somehow, through the process of doing that play, I tapped into something that I was able to bring to Stone and into the storyline, and it sort of catapulted me, because I really didn't have the skill set to play the depth of what Stone was dealing with."

You were considerably older than

SONJA FLEMMING/CBS

MICHELLE STAFFORD

(NINA REEVES, 2014-19)

How did the role of Nina come your way? “There was a good 12 months before I went to GH after THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS [where she plays Phyllis]. I did not leave Y&R to go to GH. But Frank [Valentini, executive producer] was a friend and kept in communication with me and told me about the role and what they wanted to do with the role and it seemed like a good time.”

What did you know about Nina? “I just knew that Nina was married to Silas and she had been in a coma. I remember when he goes, ‘She has been in a coma and she had issues conceiving.’ I’m like, ‘*Really*?’ Only because I was so over doing IVF personally and also Phyllis was in a coma. It was kind of on the nose, but I honestly don’t think they were trying to be on the nose; I think that was just the story that Ron [Carlivati, then-head writer] came up with. And Finola [Hughes, Anna] is such a close friend and Ian [Buchanan, ex-Duke] was on the show at the time and a good friend. I watched GENERAL HOSPITAL when I was a youngster, and that was very exciting to me, to be on the show that is a huge part of the reason why I’m an actress. I never said it to Tony [Geary, ex-Luke] because I was too embarrassed to say it, but he is a big reason why I’m an actor today. I would watch him and he was having so much fun and I just thought, ‘I want to do that. I want to do what that guy is doing.’ ”

What was it like, then, to step on a set you knew from being a viewer? “It was so exciting. Leslie Charleson’s [Monica] dressing room was right next to mine, and she’s such a lovely woman. Working with all the veterans was always just really an honor for me. I do recall the very first scene that I had with Tony and I was losing my s--t. Frank comes over and I was breathing hard, I said, ‘Alright, keep it together, keep it together.’ I don’t think Frank really understood how important that was to me. Of course, I didn’t tell Tony.”

And you had won Emmys the same night in 2004. “That, too! I was like, ‘I cannot believe that I have won an award at the same time as him.’ Those are little jewels in life that you sit on your deathbed and think, ‘Yeah, that was nice.’ ”

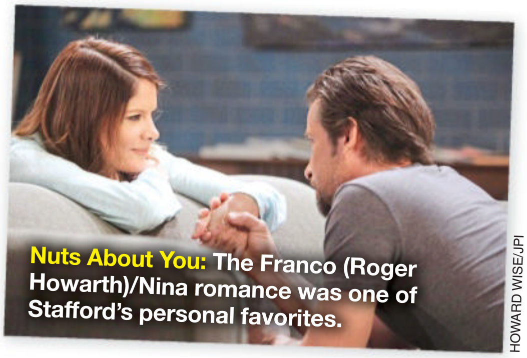
It was a very dramatic shot when Nina opened her eyes in that first scene. What do you recall about it? “Well, I read the script and the first time you were going to see Nina was at the park and I’m like, ‘*What*?’ Nina’s in a coma and coming out of a coma, Phyllis was still in a coma on Y&R. I called up Frank and I said, ‘Frank, I think you’re missing a very big opportunity here. You need to see Nina wake up from her coma.’ He’s like, ‘Yeah, you’re right.’ He talked to Ron and that became the shot where she wakes up and says, ‘Silas.’ They snuck me into GH to do it. It was a very clandestine operation.”

What stands out about your early co-stars? “I worked with Ryan Paevey [ex-Nathan] first. What a doll. I love, love, loved the sister/brother thing that we created. I could look at him and fall apart. And everyone loves Michael Easton [Finn; then-Silas]. He’s a class act and a smart actor and a good actor. Kirsten Storms [Maxie] is just the greatest and adorable.”

What about the Franco/Nina pairing? “I’ll be honest — that storyline is definitely in the top two storylines that I’ve done in daytime. I know it was riddled with traps. I know that we were away from the rest of the canvas. I know that, but to me a love story told in a psych ward was really cool and interesting. I had never seen anything like that on daytime. I loved working with Roger [Howarth, Austin; ex-Franco]. He is very inventive and complex and I like that. He would throw curveballs and I feel like I caught them and I threw them back and playing that storyline was really fun to me, I had a good time doing that.”

Do you have a favorite memory of your time on GH? “There are a few. I loved working with J.P.S. [James Patrick Stuart, Valentin]. That was a good time. James and I laughed all the time and Finola, she was part of the story, the three of us, we just had a good time. Joy is very important to me and I had a lot of it when I was there.”

What does it mean to you that you were a GH viewer and now part of its history? “That’s really cool. I don’t know if I can eloquently describe it. This is the show that my sister and I watched and bonded with each other over. It was on at three o’clock in Los Angeles and we ran home from school so quick so we wouldn’t miss it. And then when the VHS came out, we had one of those early, and were able to tape it. My sister and I were glued to the show and to Tony. Both of us.”



Nuts About You: The Franco (Roger Howarth)/Nina romance was one of Stafford’s personal favorites.

HOWARD WISE/JPI

Kimberly McCullough (ex-Robin) while playing her character’s first love. How did you approach that? “That age gap was difficult. I had been in many relationships with women in my own life, so I was like, ‘Is the audience going to believe this?’ That was the challenge. I played Stone very simple, naive and very vulnerable. With Robin, he didn’t try to play too cool for school and I think that’s why it worked. I think the audience liked the fact that Stone sort of let Robin dominate him, where he was the tough guy trying to pretend he was cool to everybody else. Robin was his kryptonite; that’s how I played it.”

The degree of difficulty of your storyline ratcheted up when Stone was diagnosed with AIDS. What stands out to you about what went into those months of work? “I was 23, and most 23-year-olds aren’t thinking about death. I remember going to hospices and meeting patients and seeing all of the repercussions, emotionally and physically, that come with [HIV and AIDS]. That helped get me to a place where I could imagine what it would be like to be facing death. I really immersed myself and I’m forever grateful for that experience, and we have to give GENERAL HOSPITAL credit because the storyline helped shape the narrative and beat down stereotypes. People felt connected to Stone in a way that helped take away the stigma of the disease.”

Would you like to take this opportunity to apologize to the GENERAL HOSPITAL audience for how hard you made them cry with Stone’s devastating death scene? “[*Laughs*] Thank you for that. Listen, I think it was just special all the way through. Kimberly and I were dedicated and committed and had support from the producers and the directors, from [then-Executive Producer] Wendy Riche to the consultants and the acting coaches. We really went for it and I think anybody with a heart who watched that show couldn’t help but cry their eyes out. We told a heartbreaking, heart-wrenching love story that genuinely resonated and I’m grateful just to have been a part of it.”

As GH celebrates its 60th anniversary, what does your role in its legacy mean to you? “Everything. The fact that I wasn’t just a day player role, that I was in storyline that someone would think about decades later, like the AIDS story, that it stands the test of time, that means everything to me. I hope we continue to stand the test of time.”

The Long Good-bye: Robin (Kimberly McCullough) and Stone (Michael Sutton) were parted by death.

CATHY BLAIVAS/ABC

RICKY MIDDLESWORTH/ABC

KELLY THIEBAUD

(BRITT WESTBOURNE, 2012-14, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2020-2023)

How did you joining GH come about? "I was auditioning for a lot of things at that time and getting really, really close on booking a prime-time show — like, it was between me and another girl for several different shows. GH came around and I was like, 'Sure, I'll audition for this. I don't really want to do a soap, but I'll do the audition.' I didn't get the job that I initially auditioned for, but I got offered Britt. I know Mark Teschner [casting director]; we go back longer than just my time on GH. He's close with me and knows my manager and so he called us and said, 'Look, we have this role that we think Kelly would be really right for, the hot doctor who's coming in to stir up some problems.' "

Britt came on as sort of a one-note bad girl and evolved a lot over the years. "It was so fun to start off the way I did when Britt was just a recurring character. It was so much fun to play the bad girl — announcing she's pregnant on stage at the Nurses' Ball, all the stuff with Patrick and Sabrina, being rude to Emma at Kelly's Diner. When they were like, 'Oh, I think there's something here with this character, let's bring her on full-time,' the writers really went deep with her and created a backstory and little by little, the audience got to see more of who she is and understand her a little more. When the writers started playing around with the humorous side of Britt, I dove into that and was like, 'Yes, let's go there!' I do feel like I slowly brought my personality into the character and I can look back and be proud of that, that I did find humor in a lot of drama and was able to bring some lightness and funny moments to a very dramatic show. I'm grateful that the writers played with that a lot and let me play with it."

You were paired with pretty iconic GH leading men, from Jason Thompson (ex-Patrick) to Tyler Christopher (ex-Nikolas) to Steve Burton (ex-Jason). "And I loved all of them. They were wonderful and unique in their own way. I can absolutely look back on my time on the show and say, 'Wow, what a cool experience.' I feel so lucky, I really do. It was just a privilege to be on a show with such incredible people and an incredible legacy."

Were you taken by surprise when the Britt/Jason pairing took off? "Oh, my gosh, so much, yes! I did not see it at first. Steve said to me, 'Hey, I think they're trying to see our chemistry. This is a long game, let's not rush it.' We were very slow with bringing these characters to liking each other and understanding, 'Oh, there's something here.' One day it just clicked, it turned. I was like, 'Oh, we work really well together! There's something here between us.' And the fans were so receptive to us — after a while [*laughs*]. But yeah, I was very surprised when it all just clicked in."

Britt was unlucky in romantic love, but very blessed in the friendship department. "I absolutely loved working with Parry Shen [Brad]; we have such similar senses of humor and I think he brings something completely different to the show that was so much fun to play off of, and the friendship she formed with Maxie was so much fun, too. Kirsten [Storms, Maxie] is such a pro. For those two people to be her best friends? I mean, 'Hell, yes!' We had the best time."

You left and came back a bunch of times over the years. What did having GH as a bit of a professional home base that you could come back to mean to you? "Well, it provided for me to pay my bills and not be stressed. I definitely found myself as an actor throughout that experience on GH and learned so much about myself going through that experience. It's hard to put into words how meaningful it was. I think that's why me leaving the show and soaking it in that last day hit me in such a big, unexpected way because so much happened over the years I was there. It has been a home that I've gone to and these people have been something of a family to me. You sit in the makeup room and talk about what's going on in your life; you share so much when you're there and you give so much and it really is a special experience."

SEAN SMITH/JPI

Everyone's A Critic: BFF Brad (Parry Shen) and Britt had a blast reviewing red carpet fashions at the 2015 Nurses' Ball.

CHRIS HASTON/ABC

GREG VAUGHAN

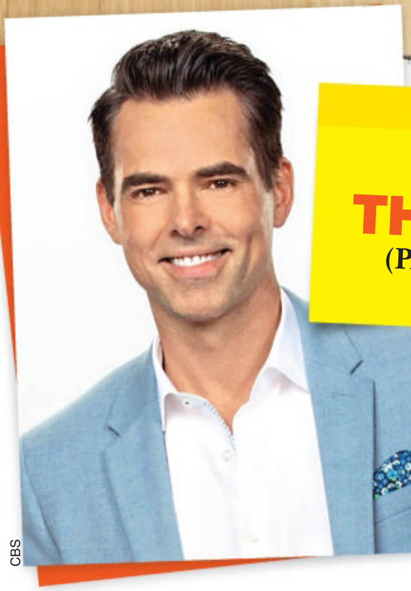
(LUCKY SPENCER, 2003-09)

How did the role of Lucky come your way? "I was finishing up my arc on YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS [as Diego]. I got a call from my team saying, 'GENERAL HOSPITAL is looking for a new actor for this role. It wasn't disclosed what the role will be, you're going to go straight to test.' So on that Monday, after work, I went to GH for my audition, and then upon completion at Y&R on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, I got the call that I got the job! Power of prayer! Never second-guess what's in store when one door closes and another one opens."

How did you feel when you found out that you were going to play the son of the legendary Luke and Laura? "Of course, I was overwhelmed with excitement. I knew that there had been some truly great, respected actors to play the role — Jonathan [Jackson, ex-Lucky] and Jacob [Young, ex-Lucky] — hats off to them both. When I first met Tony [Geary, ex-Luke], I introduced myself and I was like, 'I'm playing your son, Lucky,' and he looked at me and he said, 'Damn, my son just keeps getting better looking!' Tony is, above and beyond, the greatest daytime actor that I've ever worked with. I am in awe of his craft, his work ethic and his effortlessness. He would want his co-stars to be the scene-stealers more than himself. Overall, his graciousness and his humility is beyond endearing and why I have so much love for him."

And what about Genie (Francis, Laura)? "Unfor- tunately, I only got to work with Genie for a short stint. With Tyler [Christopher, ex-Nikolas], Julie [Marie Berman, ex-Lulu] and I, the whole family dynamic was obviously an experience, but being a part of Luke and Laura being remarried, on location, with a horse and buggy, was paying respect to their historical union of the '80s."

What was it like to work with Becky


CBS

JASON THOMPSON

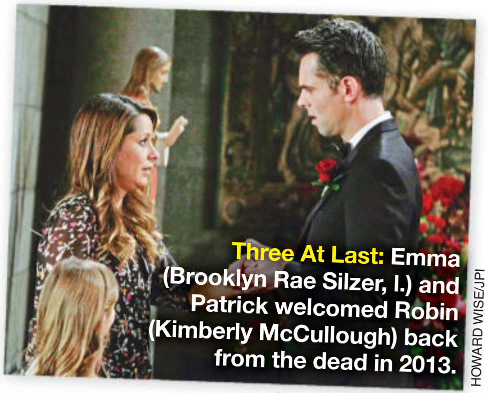
(PATRICK DRAKE, 2005-16)

You spent a decade playing Patrick. What most stands out to you when you think back on him? "I think Patrick Drake was an incredible character, very thoughtful and troubled and vulnerable. In 10 years, with Patrick, you really got to see someone grow up. When I left it was a very, very difficult decision; I loved everybody there, it wasn't for any other reason but that I felt that I needed a change. I walked away really kind of nervous that there would be another Patrick Drake walking through the door because every show has the right to [recast] a great character like that. But to think that that character is out there living his life right now gives me really amazing comfort. Sometimes I think about him. 'Where is he? What's he doing? What's his life like?' People still hit me up on social media and reminisce about an episode or a storyline. It's incredible to be able to have that effect on people, where they still think about it, they're still rewatching episodes and thinking about relationships."

When you first auditioned, you didn't know that Rick Springfield (ex-Noah) would be playing your father. "Yeah, when I was testing for the role, I was downstairs in the dressing room after doing blocking with Kimberly [McCullough, ex-Robin] and I was sitting there, just kind of going over my stuff and I got a knock on the door and it was [Casting Director] Mark Teschner. He asked me some questions, asked if I needed anything, and he mentioned, 'You know, Rick Springfield is your father; you're playing his son.' I was like, 'Oh, wow.' He said, 'You know Rick Springfield?' I said, 'Of course I know Rick Springfield!' He walked away and I was like, 'Oh, my God, that's huge!' Kimberly, before we finished blocking, said, 'If you need to run lines again, come and find me,' so after I found that out, and took my little minute for my nerves to settle down, I went to go find Kimberly and knocked on her door and she didn't answer. I came to find out a couple years later that she was in there, sleeping, and heard the knock but didn't answer it [*laughs*]."

The Robin/Patrick relationship was one of the most successful pairings GH produced in the 2000s. Can you reflect on the "Scrubs" phenomenon a bit? "I think there was something really special there and so much of that goes back to the character and the storyline that Kimberly was a part of for so long. When you're talking about someone with HIV and how they live their life and the struggles they go through, it's incredible that we were able to do that and to watch someone evolve over time. I'm incredibly honored to have been a part of something like that. It was an incredible relationship. Then having Emma, and [portrayer] Brooklyn [Rae Silzer] coming onto the show. I remember her just learning how to read, reading scripts. It was an incredible time. For me, getting to learn from Kimberly was an incredible opportunity because she was so thorough in what she did. She would push back on things that didn't feel true because she innately knew how to tell a story. Sometimes you get lightning in a bottle and you run with it and you enjoy it and I feel like we did. I loved Patrick's relationship with Sam, too. I thought that was great and Kelly [Monaco, Sam] is a dear friend. Even with Becky [Herbst, Elizabeth], they had a very interesting, great friendship that never went further than that but there was a lot of respect there. Patrick was able to have a lot of great relationships with women; he didn't have the best relationships with men [*laughs*]. It was just a really good time with great people. That's how I see it."

What does your role in GH's history mean to you? "I truly love that character and it feels good that he's out there living his life. I'm humbled and grateful to have been part of a pairing that people still talk about and I'm incredibly grateful and just honored to have been a part of the show, a part of its history."


Three At Last: Emma (Brooklyn Rae Silzer, l.) and Patrick welcomed Robin (Kimberly McCullough) back from the dead in 2013.

HOWARD WISE/JPI

Herbst (Elizabeth)? "She's just as beautiful in life as she is on screen. I adore her and the chemistry we created. I was very new and she was nothing short of deeply committed to me coming on board and giving it her all. We talked about creating our own magic and I was so fortunate to stand alongside of her."

You had an incredible run during that drug storyline. What did it mean that the show gave you something so rich and deep to work with? "As an actor you're always hoping for the opportunity to show your writers, executives or cast the reason why you were chosen to play the role. In the beginning, I was still very new to daytime, while learning about my character and the show and patiently waiting for the opportunity for a heavy story. So when [then-Head Writer] Bob Guza explained the new direction/storyline, I was extremely excited. It was when I truly felt I was a part of the GH family."

When you look back and think about GH, what comes to mind? "It was my most formative years of really understanding and learning about the daytime world. I am very proud of my time with GH. Working with the likes of Tony Geary, Maurice Benard [Sonny] and Steve Burton [ex-Jason], Kelly Monaco [Sam], Natalia Livingston [ex-Emily], Laura Wright [Carly], Ted King [ex-Luis/Lorenzo] — I mean, the list goes on. I was just in awe of the talent I was so fortunate to work alongside and create such magic. Sometimes, it felt like I was living my college life I never had. We became a fraternity with Jason Thompson [ex-Patrick], Steve, Derk [Cheetwood, ex-Max] and Drew [Cheetwood, ex-Milo]; we just had a good boys' crew and I was happy. I have nothing but fond memories. One of my all-time favorite memories was sitting in the front row of Radio City Music Hall next to Tony Geary when he won an Emmy. I was like, 'Man, I am playing the role of Lucky Spencer and Tony's my dad?!' He set the bar for me!"

What does it mean to you that the show is turning 60 and you played a role in its legacy? "That's spectacular! It's well-deserved and I wish nothing but the best for them. I always and forever will be a fan."

Aisle Be There: Vaughan recognized the significance of being a part of Luke (Anthony Geary) and Laura's (Genie Francis) wedding 2.0.

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

MICHAEL MATTES/SHUTTERSTOCK

STEPHEN NICHOLS

(STEFAN CASSADINE, 1996-2002, 2003)

What do you remember about getting the job on GH? "It all happened very quickly. In 1996, I had signed with an agent in New York. I had always dreamt of working there in the theater. My intention was to look for a soap on the East Coast to support my theater work. Around that same time, I attended a fan event with Mary Beth [Evans, ex-Katherine; Kayla, DAYS] in L.A. Before I knew it, I was meeting with Wendy Riche [then-executive producer] over at GH. They were planning to bring on the younger son of Mikkos Cassadine, Stavros's younger brother, Stefan; reviving the Cassadine/Spencer feud. The story they pitched at GH intrigued me. I was excited to start my journey as Stefan Darius Mikkosovich Cassadine."

What stands out about the early days? "The amazing dialogue I was given. And how difficult it was to memorize so many monologues. I was driving my wife crazy! It was a lot of work but so well-written. The great Patrick Mulcahey [then-script writer] was responsible for much of the Cassadine dialogue. The sets were absolutely gorgeous. The actors! Constance [Towers, ex-Helena], Mary Beth, Tony [Geary, ex-Luke], Tyler [Christopher, ex-Nikolas], Nancy [Lee Grahn, Alexis], Jackie [Zeman, Bobbie]. All superb and so much fun to play opposite."

When did you feel like your role was catching on? "Right from the beginning, the stars were aligned, and everything seemed to fall into place. Everyone was so supportive. I owed so much of the success of this new character to the writers' ability to incorporate the Cassadine family history, also to the lyrical, often poetic exchanges and speeches we were given. These writers were some of the very best in daytime. I suppose I felt like the role was catching on when a large faction of the audience started rooting for Stefan and Laura. I was told that no one had ever come between Luke and Laura up until this time."

Do you have a favorite storyline from your run as Stefan? "I loved the reveal when Stefan told Nikolas that he was his father. The depth of Nikolas and Stefan's journey was the most satisfying. Also, Laura and Stefan's backstory and rekindling of their relationship. Both Tyler and Genie [Francis] were so damn good."

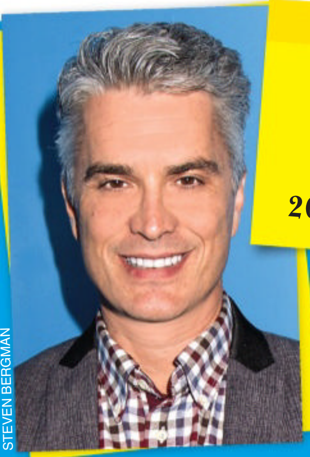
What is your favorite memory of working on GH? "There are so many favorites in the initial few years. I wouldn't say it was a favorite, but this is one that stands out. We were shooting on location in Malibu, [which was] standing in for Greece, on a cliff overlooking the ocean. Genie and I had beautiful scenes. We were going back in time to the blossoming of Stefan and Laura's love story. I was wearing these billowy muslin drawstring pants. In the middle of shooting a scene, I felt a strange sensation on my ankle, then it moved up my leg very quickly. And then ... into my underwear! It was a mouse! I never moved so fast and convulsively in my life! When the crew realized what happened, it was a real time-suck because everyone was laughing hysterically and couldn't stop."

How would you sum up your GH experience? "It was a beautiful marriage of an actor, character and story, supported by collaborators who were the best in their respective fields. I felt fortunate to have been given such a dynamic and important role."

What does it mean to you that the show is turning 60 and you were part of its history? "In television, nothing has the longevity of daytime. [Then-Executive Producer] Gloria Monty had the vision to develop the Luke and Laura pairing and saved the show from cancellation. I was so fortunate to enter that story with those great actors, icons of the medium. And to be a part of one of the most exciting decades of GH history. Having been a part of the Cassadine dynasty and of the rich 60-year legacy of GENERAL HOSPITAL is truly an honor."

Eek! A Mouse: Nichols and Genie Francis (Laura) had an unexpected guest while filming on location.

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES


STEVEN BERGMAN

RICK HEARST

(RIC LANSING, 2002-09, 2014-15, 2016)

How did the role of Ric come about? "I had done CBS shows — GUIDING LIGHT [as Alan-Michael] and YOUNG AND RESTLESS [as Matt] and BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL [as Whip]. The part of Ric wasn't really filled out. The character went through many names but I got the call to come in for consideration for the part. I got a call from [Casting Director] Mark Teschner, who said this is a pivotal role and you'll be working closely with Maurice [Benard, Sonny], and these two actors needed to jibe, and make sure that chemistry was believable. They said they were going to test some other guys. I said, 'I'm absolutely fine.' They did and through that process, I said to my manager/agent at the time they need to see who I am, what I had done on YOUNG AND RESTLESS, which I loved because it showed a duality to my work. So how it all came together was on a Friday night — the part was supposed to start on a Monday — and when my phone rang, it was my agent and I got the role and I was like, 'What is happening here?' "

What do you remember about your first day? "Billy Warlock [ex-A.J.] was the first person I saw and he said, 'Hearst is here. He is the journeyman of daytime. He picks up his bag and wherever he is needed, he goes.' I opened in a South American prison and the rest is history. My hair was short from B&B and they had to put a wig on me since I was in a South American prison."

How did you find Ric's voice? "It was a journey. Alan-Michael was a nice guy. Whip was funny. It was a fine line to play nice and not so nice."

What stands out about your scene partners? "Tamara Braun [ex-Carly] was the perfect dancing partner, as well as Rebecca Herbst [Elizabeth]. We had our own twisted voices to play in this story and we did it. I remember my first fan event and being verbally accosted by fans and I heard them, but had to commit and be one of those guys."

What was your most memorable GH storyline? "My first, working with Maurice. Before I started, we went to a restaurant not far from the studio and I had my scenes in my pocket and that was very special. I never pulled them out; we just talked. It was a tumultuous relationship on screen but I loved it. I had such wonderful scene partners to work with, and I can still call them friends to this day, and that does not always happen, but it did here. I loved working with Maurice and Becky and Nancy [Lee Grahn, Alexis]. It was such a wonderful time and I cherish it."

Did you ever think Ric would have been around for as long as he was? "I did not, and this was one of the greatest experiences of my life. My role was ever-evolving and as an actor, you hope for that. Did I ever think I'd be a part of a 60-year legacy? No. But when I went to a grocery store or an airport and someone would look at you and acknowledge you, that is it. It is the gift that keeps on giving. It's really nice when they say I'm handsome, and usually I only get that from my wife, so thank you!"

What does it mean to you to be a part of GH's legacy? "I'm aboveground and it's still here, thankfully."

Family Dynamic: "It was a tumultuous relationship on screen but I loved it," says Hearst of his storyline with on-screen brother Maurice Benard (Sonny).

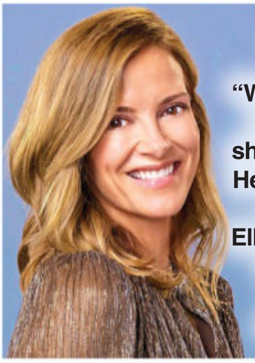
HOWARD WISE/JPI

WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOU WHEN YOU THINK BACK ON YOUR TIME ON GH?

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

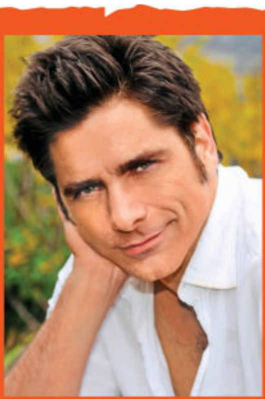
Emme Rylan (Lulu Spencer, 2013-20)

"Getting to play the daughter of Luke and Laura was the most amazing opportunity. I had worked with Genie [Francis, Laura] on Y&R; she played Genevieve and I played Abby, and our characters were at odds with each other. Genie and I were sitting at a table on the Y&R set one day and she said, 'Oh, my gosh, it would be so fun if you played my daughter someday.' So, Genie and I had a bond before I even came to GH, so I knew that I loved her and knew that I loved working with her, but it was so exciting to actually get to play her daughter. Tony [Geary, ex-Luke], it feels like anything I say would sound generic because all anyone can say about him is that he's just magical to be around and to work with! But it's so true. There is something that happens with him when the cameras are rolling that is just the most incredible experience. The other thing that stands out is that when I joined the show, Lulu already had a best friend in Maxie — but little did *I* know, I would get one in Kirsten [Storms, Maxie]."


LINDSAY SIU/CBS

Rebecca Budig (Hayden Barnes, 2015-17, 2019)

"What stands out the most are the wonderful friendships I made with Rebecca Herbst [Elizabeth], Michael Easton [Finn] and Jane Elliot [Tracy], who is one of my best friends. And, of course, meeting sweet Jophielle Love [Violet]!"


JIM WARREN

John Stamos (Blackie Parrish, 1982-84)

"I'll always credit GENERAL HOSPITAL for my success. I'm indebted to [then-Executive Producer] Gloria Monty and [then-Head Writer] Norma Monty and everything I learned from them. I still use it to this day. I know sometimes it can sound belittling to say that soaps are a great training ground, but I did learn an awful lot. The cast was wonderful and welcoming. It was my first real job and I just couldn't get enough of it. They would have to tell me to go home at night. I was a sponge and I'm glad I was, because the experience will be something I hold dearly for the rest of my life. I wish them the very best on their 60th — and my 60th is coming up, too! I'll tell you what, it'll be a much more beautiful celebration because of my start on GENERAL HOSPITAL."

JENNIFER JOHANN

Cari Shayne (Karen Wexler, 1992-94, 1995)

"My years on GENERAL HOSPITAL were so special! I was only 19 when I joined the show. It was the first job I ever had as an actor, and Steve Burton [ex-Jason] was instrumental in showing me the ropes! He quickly became my best buddy. Our dressing rooms were right next to each other, and our doors were always open. He lovingly gave me the hip-hop moniker 'Cari-D' and we would jump around our dressing rooms blasting the House of Pain song 'Jump Around' and play basketball on his Nerf mini basketball hoop. Soon, Vanessa Marcil [ex-Brenda], Antonio Sabato, Jr. [ex-Jagger], Sean Kanan [ex-A.J.] and Kimberly McCullough [ex-Robin] joined in. We were quite a crew! As a new actor, I loved working with all the veterans on the show and learned so much from them — Leslie Charleson [Monica], John Reilly [ex-Sean], Norma Connolly [ex-Ruby], Jackie Zeman [Bobbie] and especially Stuart Damon [ex-Alan]! Stuart was like a father to me. He would pinch the apples of my cheeks every time he saw me. My storyline was extremely heavy, and his presence and giant bear hugs were an incredible comfort to me. I absolutely adored him and was so grateful for his guidance. I'll never forget the day I met Maurice Benard [Sonny]! I had heard what an incredible actor he was, so I was a little nervous about going toe-to-toe with him. The first time I worked with him, he showed up on set to do a scene with me in the strip club, already in character. He was intense and had this underlying menacing quality about him that made the scene feel electric and alive! It was so thrilling, and I was ecstatic that he would be such an integral part of my character's journey! Sonny may have not been good for Karen, but Maurice brought out the best in me as an actor. He inspired me to dig deep, find the truth and deliver authentically. Working with him was a true gift!"

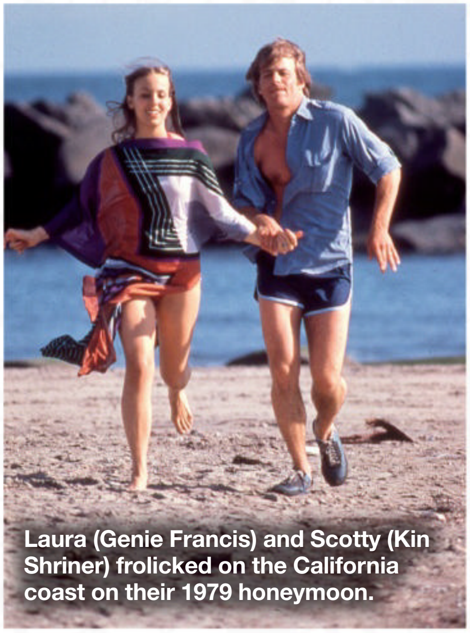
OMAR CRUZ

Lilly Melgar (Lily Rivera, 1994-96, 2001)

"When I was a teenager, I had two dreams. One, to be on GENERAL HOSPITAL. Two, to work with Maurice Benard [Sonny], who I was such a fan of when I saw him playing Desi Arnaz [in the 1991 TV movie LUCY & DESI: BEFORE THE LAUGHTER]. Never did I think that two dreams would come true simultaneously, as they did in the '90s. Add to that, I got to work with one of my favorite people on the planet, Ricky Martin [ex-Miguel], who is one of my best friends. Add to that, we were the first Latin leading couple in the history of soaps as characters. All of that simultaneously is such a magical moment in my life that taught me that dreams really can come true. It was such a beautiful time. It all makes me smile. Getting to work with Ricky on the daily, getting to lean on each other the way that we did; getting to work with Maurice and have him take me under his wing the way that he did and make me believe in my talent and applaud my acting and encourage me and support me the way that he did; for GENERAL HOSPITAL to write us in, and ask me if they could keep my name because they loved it so much and I said, 'Sure, let's just spell it with one "l".' Getting to work with [then-Executive Producer] Wendy Riche and [then-Head Writer] Claire Labine at a time when GENERAL HOSPITAL was at an all-time high, winning Emmys, the greatest storyline with Stone. It was just an incredible time to be part of GENERAL HOSPITAL and I am forever grateful and I look back on that time in my life and I still smile ear to ear because it warms my heart."

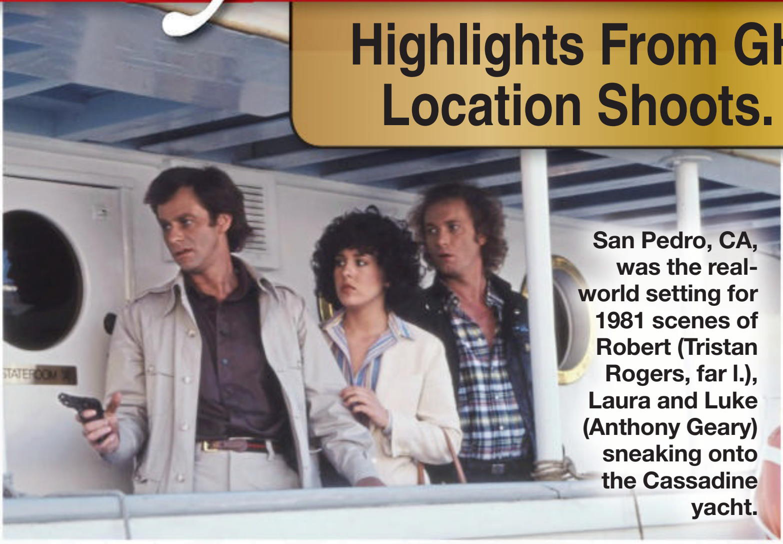
HERE, THERE & Everywhere

Highlights From GH Location Shoots.



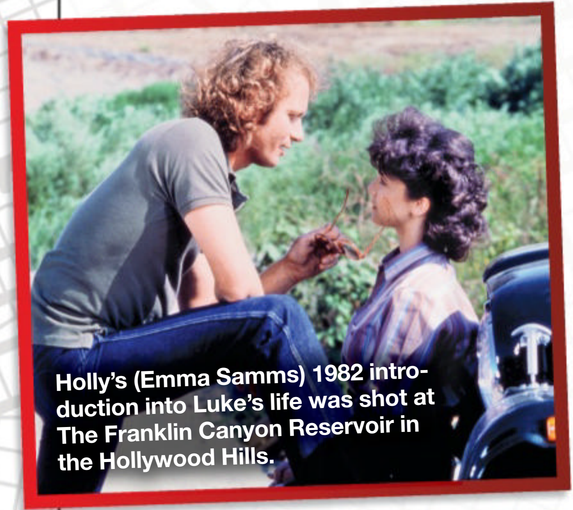
Laura (Genie Francis) and Scotty (Kin Shriner) frolicked on the California coast on their 1979 honeymoon.

ABC



San Pedro, CA, was the real-world setting for 1981 scenes of Robert (Tristan Rogers, far l.), Laura and Luke (Anthony Geary) sneaking onto the Cassadine yacht.

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES



Holly's (Emma Samms) 1982 introduction into Luke's life was shot at The Franklin Canyon Reservoir in the Hollywood Hills.

ABC

In 1984, the show sent Grant (Brian Patrick Clarke) and Celia (Sherilyn Wolter) skiing in Utah and fishing in Big Bear, CA.

ERIK HEIN/ABC; ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Sean (John Reilly) used this helicopter to abscond with the Aztec treasure in Mexico in 1985.

ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES

Robert and Anna (Finola Hughes) had their *From Here to Eternity* moment in 1985 flashback scenes shot in Santa Barbara, CA.

ERIK HEIN/ABC

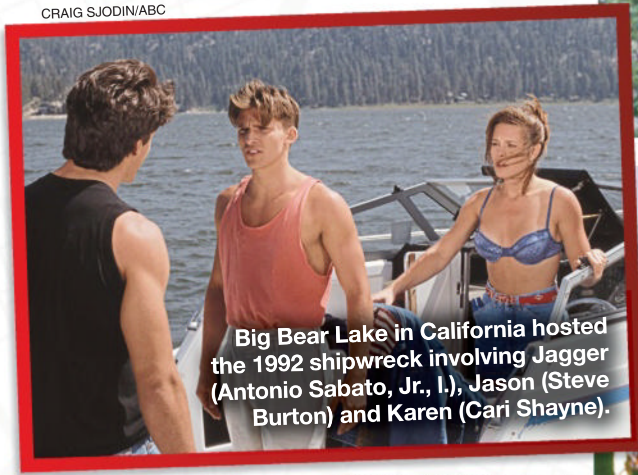
DONNA SVENNEVIK/ABC

Felicia (Kristina Wagner) and Frisco (Jack Wagner) went incognito on the Atlantic City boardwalk in 1986.

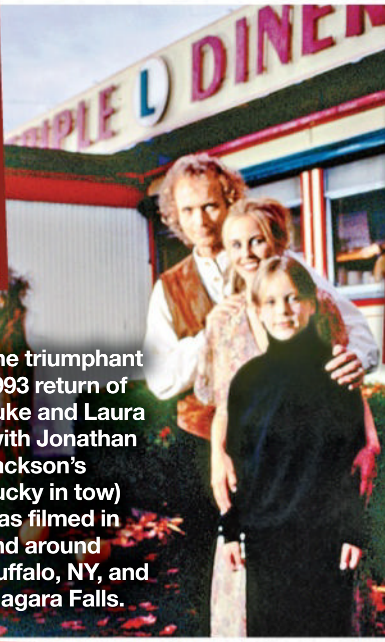
JERRY FITZGERALD/ABC

In 1987, Dusty (Shaun Cassidy) and Terry (Robyn Bernard) booked a singing gig at Mount Rushmore — at which he was programmed by the DVX to kill her!

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

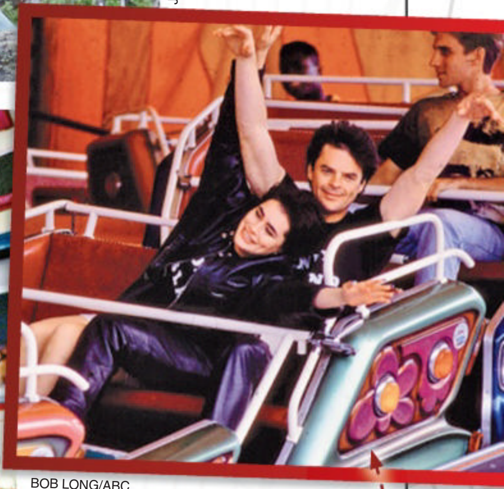


Big Bear Lake in California hosted the 1992 shipwreck involving Jagger (Antonio Sabato, Jr., I.), Jason (Steve Burton) and Karen (Cari Shayne).



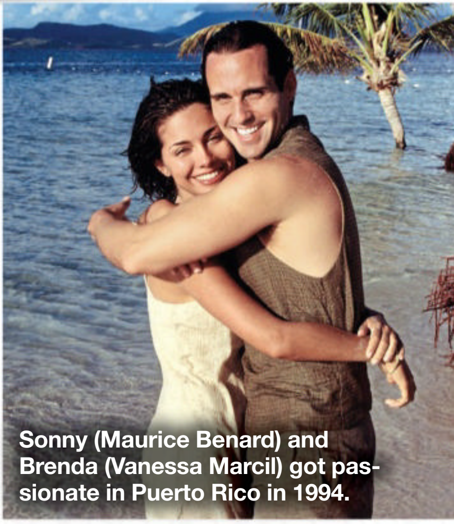
CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

The triumphant 1993 return of Luke and Laura (with Jonathan Jackson's Lucky in tow) was filmed in and around Buffalo, NY, and Niagara Falls.



BOB LONG/ABC

Ned (Wally Kurth) and Lois (Rena Sofer) felt like kids again on their 1994 honeymoon in Coney Island.



CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

Sonny (Maurice Benard) and Brenda (Vanessa Marcil) got passionate in Puerto Rico in 1994.

In 2010, Franco's (James Franco) provocative art show, "Francophrenia", was staged at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles.

STEFANIE KEENAN/GETTY IMAGES

CHRISTINE BARTOLUCCI/ABC

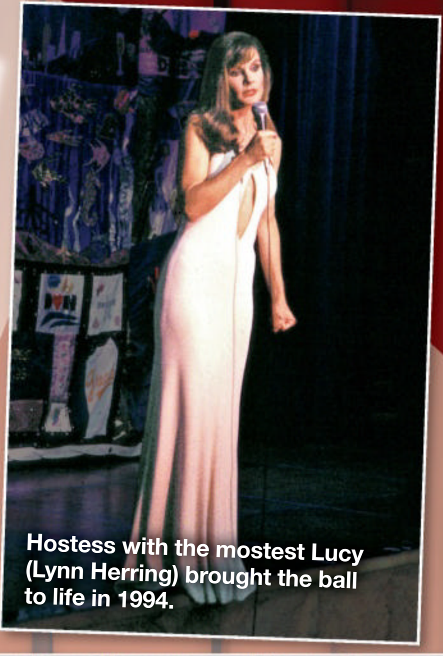
Drew (Cameron Mathison) was by Carly's (Laura Wright) side when she spread adoptive mother Virginia's ashes in Jacksonville, FL — really, a beach in Malibu, CA — in 2022.

RON TOM/ABC

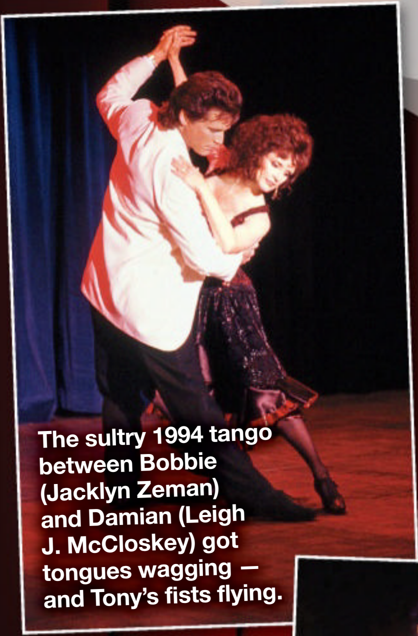
Long Beach, CA's harbor stood in for Port Charles's in 2012 when Jerry (Sebastian Roché) kidnapped Alexis (Nancy Lee Grahn).

THE SHOW *Must Go On*

A photo history of the social event of the Port Charles season — the Nurses' Ball!


Hostess with the mostest Lucy (Lynn Herring) brought the ball to life in 1994.

VIVIAN ZINK/ABC


The sultry 1994 tango between Bobbie (Jacklyn Zeman) and Damian (Leigh J. McCloskey) got tongues wagging — and Tony's fists flying.

VIVIAN ZINK/ABC

In 1995, Miguel (Ricky Martin) crooned "The Power to Believe".

CATHY BLAIVAS/ABC

Mary Mae (Rosalind Cash) and her "Pips" — (from l.) Justus (Joseph C. Phillips), Lucky (Jonathan Jackson) and Luke (Anthony Geary) — brought the house down in 1995 with "Midnight Train To Georgia".

CATHY BLAIVAS/ABC

In 1996, Robin (Kimberly McCullough) was overwhelmed with emotion when Mac (John J. York) unveiled the late Stone's square in the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt.

CATHY BLAIVAS/ABC

Alan (Stuart Damon, pictured with Shell Kepler as Amy) opened the ball in 1997 with "It's A Grand Night For Singing".

CATHY BLAIVAS/ABC

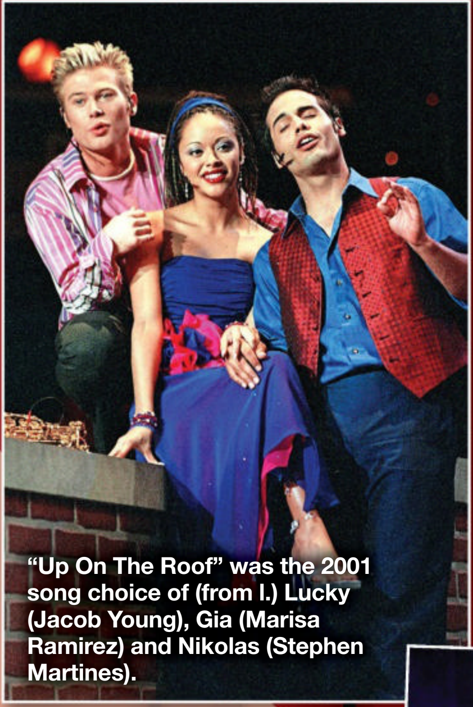
MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mac showed his gratitude for Maxie (Robyn Richards) in 1998 when he performed "Thank Heaven For Little Girls".

PHOTOS: ABC

Emily (Amber Tamblyn, far l.), Juan (Michael Saucedo) and Elizabeth (Rebecca Herbst) were feeling "Footloose" in 2000.

MITCHELL HAASETH/ABC



SCOTT GARFIELD/ABC

“Up On The Roof” was the 2001 song choice of (from l.) Lucky (Jacob Young), Gia (Marisa Ramirez) and Nikolas (Stephen Martines).

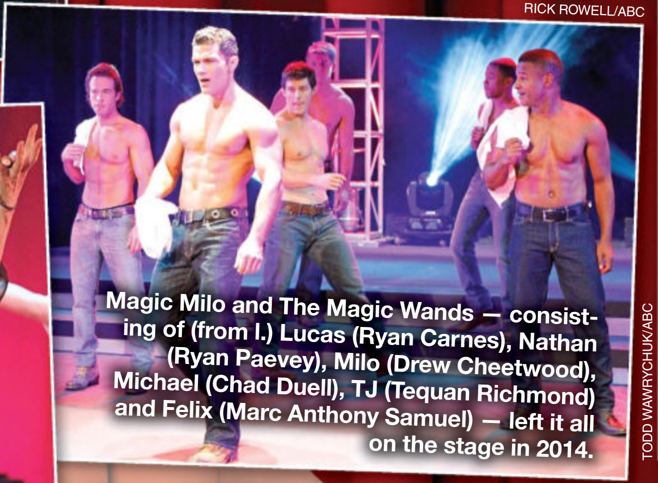
RON TOM/ABC

Epiphany (Sonya Eddy) was in her element as she opened the show upon the ball’s resurrection in 2013.

RICK ROWELL/ABC

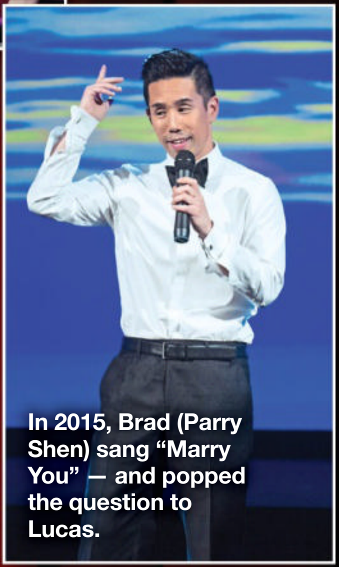
Obrecht hijacked the spotlight in 2014 with a rousing rendition of “Willkommen”.

RICK ROWELL/ABC



Magic Milo and The Magic Wands — consisting of (from l.) Lucas (Ryan Carnes), Nathan (Ryan Paevey), Milo (Drew Cheetwood), Michael (Chad Duell), TJ (Tequan Richmond) and Felix (Marc Anthony Samuel) — left it all on the stage in 2014.

TODD WAWRYCHUK/ABC



In 2015, Brad (Parry Shen) sang “Marry You” — and popped the question to Lucas.

Dillon (Robert Palmer Watkins) and Kiki (Hayley Erin) offered their take on “Modern Love” in 2017.

TODD WAWRYCHUK/ABC

RICK ROWELL/ABC

2016 saw Emma (Brooklyn Rae Silzer) and Ned (Wally Kurth) duet on “Don’t Go Breaking My Heart”.

In 2018, Sonny (Maurice Benard, near l.) stepped up to the mic to help Mike (Max Gail) complete his performance of “Summer Wind”.

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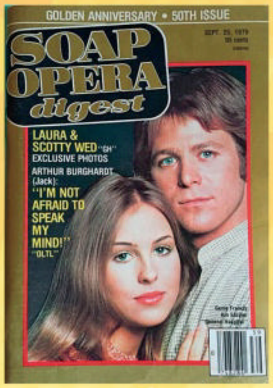
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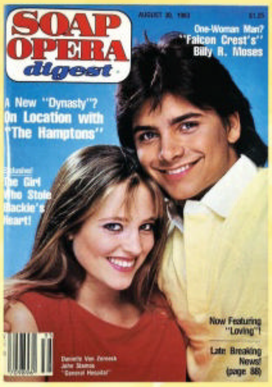
Emma Samms (Holly) and Tristan Rogers (Robert) **7/5/83**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Steve Bond (Jimmy Lee) and Sherilyn Wolter (Celia) **7/16/85**

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Ian Buchanan (Duke) and Finola Hughes (Anna) **7/28/87**

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GUIDING LIGHT FAMILY TREE
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(Clockwise from top) David Wallace (Tom), Rogers, Kimberly McCullough (Robin), Anna Lee (Lila) and Leslie Charleson (Monica) **4/5/88**

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Antonio Sabato, Jr. (Jagger) and Vanessa Marcil (Brenda) **11/24/92**

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Maurice Benard (Sonny), Marcil and Ingo Rademacher (Jax) **7/2/96**

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WHO SAID THAT? "My job is not to walk around in a Speedo."

(From l.) Sarah Brown (Carly), Billy Warlock (A.J.), Steve Burton (Jason) and McCullough **10/27/98**

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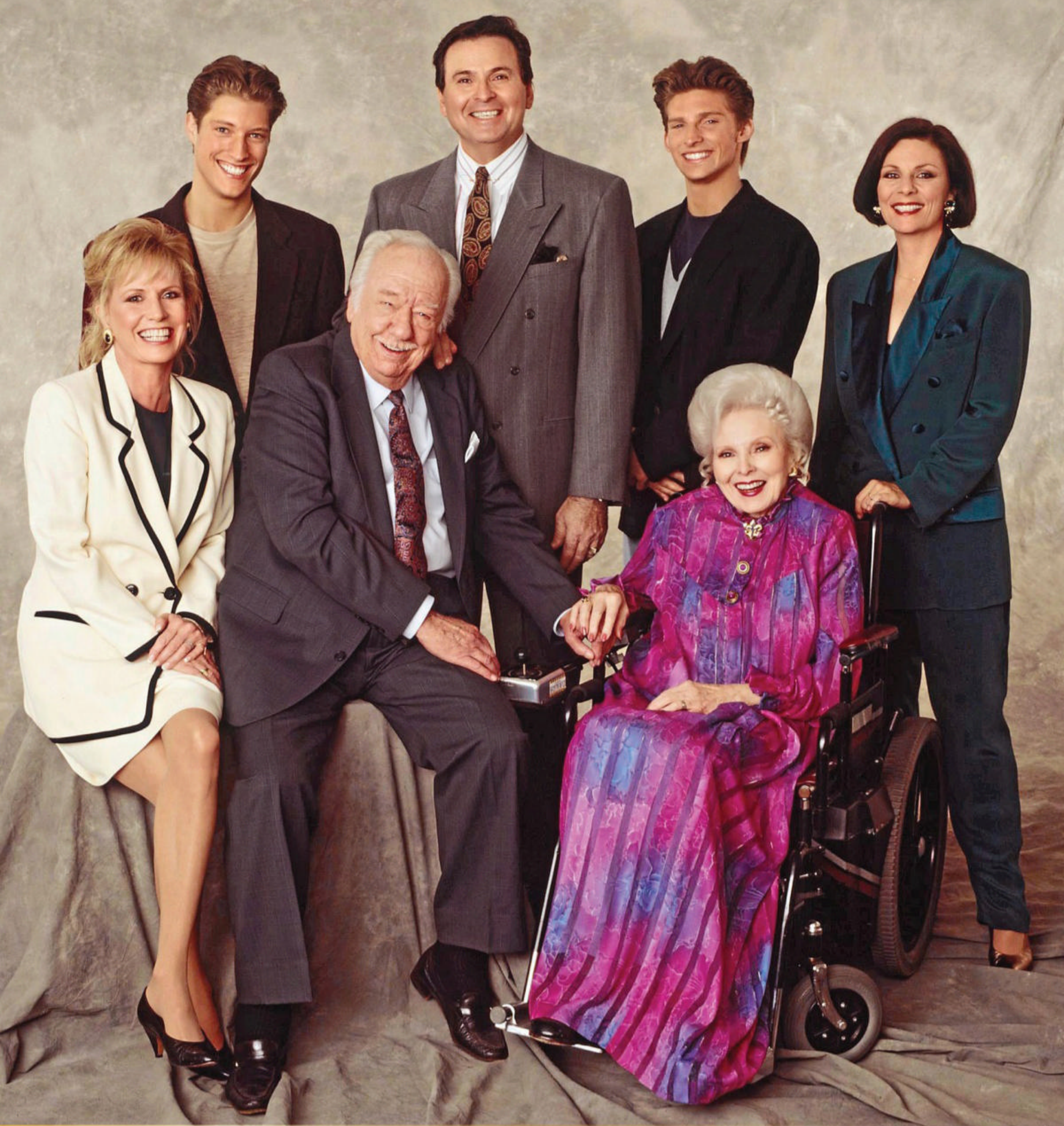
Kelly Monaco (Sam), Burton and Rebecca Herbst (Elizabeth) **4/24/07**



The Quartermaines: (From l.) Monica (Leslie Charleson), A.J. (Sean Kanan), Edward (David Lewis), Alan (Stuart Damon), Jason (Steve Burton), Lila (Anna Lee) and Tracy (Jane Elliot)

CRAIG SJODIN/ABC

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